

- 619 diate kin of the slayer, and eaten by representatives of the entire clan.
 682 It might, however, be insisted on that the slayer should marry a wife in the name of the dead clansman and raise heirs to him. Strangers having close kinship links with a dominant clan, may refuse to pay compensation, and they tend to regard killing as a sin, since the acceptance of compensation for homicide emphasised a distinction they are anxious to obliterate.⁽¹⁾ A Luo tribe can be defined as a unit in which compensation for homicide is paid, or in which there is provision for payment and the settlement of the feud.

The Tero Buru

- 619 Luo tribes were formerly separated from each other by the *thim* - a stretch of bush country left unoccupied. Between segments of the same
 766 tribe there was no *thim*. The ritual demonstration of *tero buru* took place across these boundaries. It was the custom of the Luo in the past not to bury an important man, known for his wealth or for his military ability, until the whole tribe, or a large part of it, had crossed the *thim* and demonstrated in front of the homesteads of the neighbouring tribe. The demonstration took the form of insults, challenges to fight and the tempting parade of cattle. It was a matter of honour for the challenging party to stand their ground and defend their herds with their lives. Such demonstrations were also made against neighbouring Bantu who had a similar structure to that of the Luo tribes. The demonstrating party was not usually attacked unless two *buru* parties of opposing tribes met. Sometimes, however, the opportunity was taken to try and raid the cattle of the neighbouring tribe.

- 619 Payment of compensation and the *tero buru* are the two main indications of tribal separation. In addition there is the association of a specific lineage unit with a tribe.

CLANS AND LINEAGES

- 613 Each Luo tribe has a dominant clan or lineage. The clan (*dho-ot*),
 614 has a lineage structure and lineages are differentiated by adding to the name of the clan or larger lineage *ma* and the individual name of the smaller branch. Formerly, the clans were exogamous but today the larger clans are not always so. Within the large clans maximal lineages can intermarry when the distance between them has become great enough.

- 836 Where the separation between two lineages has not proceeded far enough or where two clans are closely related there is a socially recognised form of love-making called *codo*, which takes place between the young men and girls of both groups. Marriage is not permitted until the separation has proceeded further. After some generations the less approved type of marriage (*por*) may be permitted. This is marriage by abduction and it is eventually replaced by the ordinary form (*meko*) when the complete separation and distinctiveness of the units is recognised.⁽²⁾

- 582 A man is forbidden to marry a woman who is a *wat*, a cognatic relative.

(1) Evans-Pritchard, Rhodes-Livingstone Journal, 1949, No. VII, p. 4.
 (2) Ibid., p. 7.

Among the Luo a man is excluded from marrying into clans as distant as that of his maternal grandmother or into the maximal lineage of his maternal great-grandmother. Thus a Luo man may not marry his kin, but only wasigu (enemies) with whom no kinship is recognised. It is, therefore, difficult for a man to marry into a clan or lineage within his own tribe. The system of exogamy assists in the structural differentiation of a tribe but also it creates relations of a personal and kinship nature between individuals of two different tribes. 582

The relationship between kinship and territorial units seems to follow closely the pattern found in other Nilotic tribal groups. In the Alego tribe, for example, we are told that there is a dominant clan, the Jo Alego, and its maximal lineages, the Jo Sege and the Ka Denge. There are a number of other clans and large lineages living in the tribal territory as well as small stranger groups and individuals. The presence of these clans and lineages in Alego, and their relations with the Jo Alego, are accounted for by traditions or myths in which stranger lineages and the lineages in possession (which are personified) intermarry, and the stranger lineages assume the position of in-laws. Other tribal areas have a similar structure. Evans-Pritchard states that the relative values of lineages are the same as with the Nuer. In opposition to other maximal lineages a man will give the name of his own maximal lineage but when speaking of an opposed smaller lineage he will give his own immediate lineage, the particular branch of the maximal lineage to which it belongs. (1) 613 614

The Dominant Clan

The dominant clan is usually identified linguistically with the tribe. Thus, Alego means both the tribesmen of Alego tribal territory and the patrilineal descendants of Alego. Members of the dominant clan alone are *jopiny* or *jogweng* - the people of the land and the owners of it. The rest are *jodak* - the separated people, the strangers. Stranger lineages are grafted into the lineage structure of the dominant clan so that, through recognition of female links, the whole tribe may be regarded as a system of cognatic lineages. The Luo refer to the affiliated stranger lineages as *kaorce* - lineages of in-laws, or *kauer* - lineages of maternal uncles, since it is from them that they take their wives and the mothers of their children. (2) 619 614 613

For general purposes the *jopiny* and *jodak* are on equal terms and co-operate in matters of common interest. The differentiation only appears in matters of ritual, in marriage regulations and when homicide occurs. In recent times the differentiation has become plainer through land disputes. Formerly there was enough land for everyone and more could be obtained by war and migration. Now, there is considerable inter-lineage enmity about land. The *jopiny* claim the land in virtue of their ownership of the tribal territory and as proof of this they point to the ancestral graves. Stranger lineages which are numerous and powerful may also claim to be *jopiny* in the same area and, having dwelt there for some generations, can also point to their ancestral graves. It is the general rule that a lineage has the right to cultivate land where its forebears have lived for several genera- 614 613 578

(1) Evans-Pritchard, *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal*, 1949, No. VII, pp. 10-11.

(2) *Ibid.*, p. 14.

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 tions. Sometimes several lineages can claim this right, and the structural differentiation and the type of connecting link between them is revealed in the resulting disputes.

IMPORTANT MEN AMONG THE LUO

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 There is no real political office in the Luo tribes, but there are a number of people who are of notable status.

The Ruoth

The *ruoth* is simply an influential man. He is richer in wives and cattle than most people, and he may help a poor man to marry by giving him a cow. Any man may become a *ruoth*, although he is usually a member of the dominant clan of the tribe. No such political or ritual significance are attached to the Luo *ruoth* as are associated with the Lango and Acholi *rwodi*. (1)

Thuondi

The *thuondi* are warriors of reputation. They lead all the raids against the tribal enemies. Their position depends entirely on individual ability in war, and therefore they are not necessarily succeeded by their sons.

The Won Gweng

The *won gweng* is the father of the land and a man of influence in every district. He is a senior member of a lineage of the dominant clan of the tribe, and settles land disputes within the tribe. He also sacrifices to the sacred spear of the clan, and points it towards the enemy before a tribal war begins. (2)

RITUAL EXPERTS

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 The *jabilo* is the most important of the ritual experts and the chief tribal figure. There may be more than one *jabilo* in each tribal segment, but usually one is more influential than the rest. The *jabilo* inherits his position from his father. His functions include divination of the fortunes of war, cursing the enemy and making magic to secure victory. Although he does not accompany the warriors, the *jabilo* receives part of the spoil in return for his services and is, therefore, usually a *ruoth* - a rich man. A further investigation of the *jabilo*'s place in society would be particularly interesting. It is said that he was also a peace-maker and could intervene in a fight by dragging his leopard-skin along the ground between the two opposing sides. (3) The *jabilo* sometimes exercises the functions of rain-maker (*jako*th or *won koth*).

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 Luo tribal structure appears to be, in all essentials, similar to that of the Nuer; the typical segmentary lineage structure, associated

(1) Evans-Pritchard, Rhodes-Livingstone Journal, 1949, No. VII, p. 5.

(2) *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

(3) *Ibid.*, p. 6.

cf. Nuer leopard-skin chief.

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sented the senior lineage of the clan sacrificed to the sacred spear of the clan and pointed it towards the enemy before tribal war.

There were also a number of ritual experts. The most important of these, and the most important tribal figures among the Luo, seems to have been the *jabilo*, who in the language of African literature would be described as a tribal medicine-man or witchdoctor. There was one of these functionaries in each large tribal segment but one in a tribe was generally more influential than the others and a tribe requiring the services of an exceptionally famous *jabilo* might ask for them even if he lived in a distant tribe. His functions, which tended to pass from father to son, are said to have been to divine the fortunes of war, to curse the enemy, and to make magic to secure victory and the safety of the warriors. He kept his *bilo*, war magic, in horns in a granary. He did not himself accompany a raid but in return for his ritual services he received part of the spoils and according to some informants was entrusted with its division. Consequently he was a *ruoth*, man of substance. The *jabilo* was also, at least sometimes, the *jokoth* or *won koth*, the rainmaker, while at other times the rainmaker seems to have been a different person to the *jabilo*. Rainmakers among neighbouring Bantu peoples were also appealed to. It is also said that the people had to wait permission of the *jabilo* to sow and that he had ritual functions in cases of homicide within the tribe and that he was a peacemaker who could intervene in a fight by dragging his leopard skin along the ground between the two sides.

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In each tribe there is a dominant clan or lineage. The characteristics of a Luo clan are much the same as those I have described for the Nuer.

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The Luo clan (*dho ot*) has a lineage structure, which means that every member of it can trace his exact genealogical relationship to every other member. Lineages (*dho udi*) are differentiated by adding to the name of a clan or of a larger lineage the copulative *ma* and the name of a smaller branch, as among the Lango, e.g. *Joseje ma Jokayila* are the Jokayila major lineage of the Joseje maximal lineage of the JoAlego clan. Collateral lineages are sometimes said to be *kanyiego*, presumably from *nyieka*, co-wife, to one another.

These larger clans associated with tribal territories are not always exogamous to-day, though they are believed to have been so in past times. It would be confusing to speak of two groups identical in their structural features by different terms because maximal lineages cannot intermarry in one and can intermarry in the other, so I use the word 'clan' for both, having stated a qualification to the accepted use of the term. Marriage is generally forbidden within the clan but it is recognized that the distance between maximal lineages may become so great, both in lineage-distance and through political and social separation, as to allow intermarriage between them. This has happened in the JoAlego clan of Alego where two main lineages, the JoSeje and the KaDenge quarrelled and now intermarry sometimes. On the other hand marriage is not permitted within such big clans as the KaNyikal of Seme, the KaRacuonyo of Karacuonyo, and

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582 the JoOwila of Uyoma; and is not approved, though sometimes permitted,
 613 even between such fraternal clans as the dominant clans of Karacuonyo,
 614 Kisumu, Kadem, Karungu, and Kabwoc. The young men are rebelling
 against the prohibition. Likewise I was told that though the JokOwila
 marry into the fraternal clan of Omia (Asembo) it is thought that such
 marriage may not be very fruitful.

613 Nevertheless in those big clans within which marriage is prohibited
 614 or where it is not approved between fraternal clans the custom of *codo*
 836 is permitted. *Codo* is a socially recognized love-making in which the youths
 [833] court the girls and bring them to the *simba* or bachelor's hut and sleep
 with them there and have relations with them *intra crura*. Thus the Ka-
 Abudha and KoOkelo lineages of the JoOwila clan of Uyoma may *codo*
 between them, a practice said to date from two generations ago; likewise
 the KaGumba and KaDepir lineages of the KaNyikal clan of Seme,
 though in their case it is said from the last generation only; likewise the
 JokOwidi and JokOgol of the KaRacuonyo of Karacuonyo. In these
 instances were a girl to be made pregnant her lover could not marry her.

613 When two lineages of the same clan are becoming widely separated
 614 and are beginning to *codo* between them it is done at first with discre-
 836 tion, because the older men are opposed to the innovation, then in open
 582 affairs in the bachelors' hut. Finally marriage is envisaged and perhaps
 eventually permitted, in the first place the less approved form of marriage
 by abduction (*por*) and then the ordinary form (*meko*). When marriage
 begins to take place, and even more when it has the approval of the elders,
 it may be taken to be an indication of political fission, for it was found
 among the Luo, as among the Nuer, that political values are stated in
 the language of kinship and that the politico-territorial system is reflected
 in the lineage system.

582 A man may not marry a *nyaketwo*, sister's daughter, in the classificatory
 613 sense if her mother was a member of his maximal lineage but he can marry
 614 her if her mother belonged to a collateral maximal lineage of his clan,
 184 though even then the elders do not always approve. The general principle
 of exogamy is that a man must not marry any woman whom he regards
 as a *wat*, a cognatic relative, and Luo reckon kinship as widely as to ex-
 clude a man from marrying into his maternal grandmother's clan and
 his maternal great grandmother's maximal lineage, though it must be
 said that there is often disagreement, especially between men of different
 generations about the permissibility of marriage between distantly
 related persons, that is to say, about borderline cases. In spite of some
 divergence of opinion however it may be stated that for the Luo, people
 are either *wat*, kinsfolk, or *wasigu*, enemies. A man cannot marry kin
 and therefore must marry an 'enemy'. Hence when marriage is allowed
 between two groups it means that there is no kinship between them or
 that kinship is no longer recognized between them for purpose of exogamy
 and this, as said above, is an indication of political opposition, so that one
 often hears Luo say of a neighbouring tribe, e.g. a Karacuonyo man of
 the Kocia tribe, 'They are enemies, we marry them'. In other words
 adjacent tribes are structurally opposed segments in the tribal system

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while relations of a personal kind and kinship links between individuals run across their common frontiers and are compelled to do so by the exogamous rules obtaining in Luo society.

Several of the clans and maximal lineages possess sacred spears and other objects believed to have belonged to their founders. The best known sacred spear (*tong ma lisua*, spear of sacrifice) is the *tong Alego*, the spear of Alego, the founder of the JoAlego clan. In Ugenya the JokaGer clan have several such spears and there are others in possession of the lineages descended from Cuanya to the south of the gulf. Where there are important stranger lineages in a tribe they may also have their sacred objects, e.g. in Alego the KaLuo and the JokOgelo have sacred spears and the JoAgoro have a sacred stone and a sacred pot handed down from their founders. These objects are symbols of the unity of a clan or lineage and, by extension, of the tribe or tribal segment in which it is dominant, and they were used ritually in time of war or of common calamity, such as drought and invasion by locusts. They seem generally, if not always to be held by the senior line (*dho ot ma duong*) of a lineage or clan and are kept either in a granary or in hiding in the bush. The senior line is often called on by junior collateral lines to perform important sacrifices for them and the senior lineage ought to provide the sacrificial beast at ceremonies common to all the lineages. I was told also that while each lineage had its *won gweng*, 'father of the land' the *won gweng* of the senior lineage had chief prestige among them. [782] [554]

Some clans and lineages have certain ritual prohibitions (*kwet*), mostly on certain foods, particularly kidneys and liver. The Luo do not give the impression of attaching much importance to them and if a man and a woman observe the same taboo it is not in itself a bar to marriage. Reference must also be made to clan and lineage honorific, or praise, names. The *nying paak* is generally derived from the name of a paternal ancestor whose name is a lineage cognomen, e.g. Okwiri (see the chart of the JoOwila clan) can be called, according to the circumstances, *wud* (son of) KoOkelo, *wud* KaJeje, and *wud* Owila. These names are much used at communal gatherings, especially at large beer parties. 613 614 784 551

A feature of clanship which would seem to be of some importance is the annual inter-lineage wrestling. Unfortunately, I only became aware of these shortly before I left Luoland and had afterwards no further opportunity to enquire further into the custom, or to discover whether it is practised all over Luoland or only in some tribal areas, such as U-yoma where the closely related collateral lineages wrestle for practice prior to the wrestling matches between the big lineages. Thus the Ko-Okwiri are matched against the KoObong, then these two lineages together against the KaAtuenga and KaAbudha, and so on. The lineages send a messenger to challenge the other party and when they meet an elder presides over the joint bouts and the exhibition matches between famous wrestlers on each side. The matches are said to occasion much excitement among the spectators. 613 526

The sketch given above of the Luo clan is only an outline delineating feature of it. A little detail is filled in here and there in the following 613 614

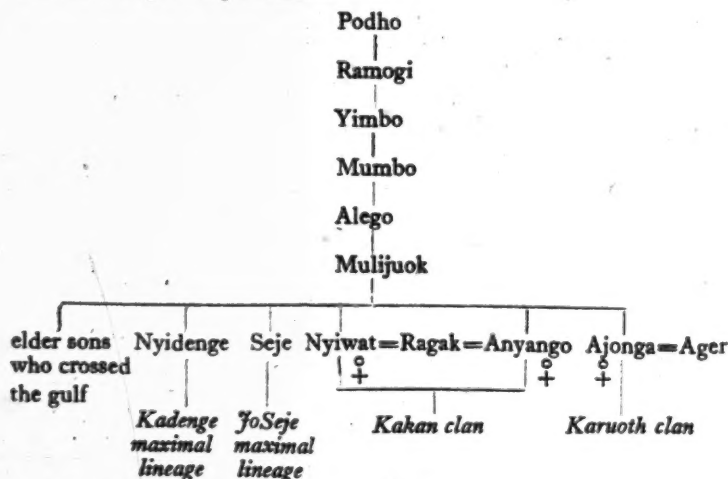
613 section where are recorded some notes about the JoAlego clan of Alego
614 tribe, the JoOwila clan of Uyoma tribe, the KaNyikal clan of Seme
tribe, and the KaRacuonyo clan of Karacuonyo tribe. It must be borne
in mind in reference to these examples, as in regard to the rules of exo-
gamy noted earlier, that these clans are associated with tribal territories
and that there are many small lineages, many of them of Bantu origin,
which have not the same spread in genealogical or physical space and
have not the same depth in lineage structure; also, that all the main clans
ultimately trace their descent from the same mythological names of
Podho and Ramogi so that it would be possible to place them all on a
single chart of descent. Since the smaller stranger lineages have points
of graft on the trees of the dominant clans it might be possible to place
the whole Luo people on a single chart. The clans, as I have described
them, are, however, the largest descent groups which have eponymous
ancestors, who are considered by the Luo to be the points at which an
exact record of ascent passes into a hazy plane of tradition where a single
line of mythological ancestors is finally lost in the beginnings of the world.
They are the points at which genealogical structure begins.

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173 In the Alego tribe the dominant clans are the JoAlego with its maximal
613 lineages, the JoSega and the KaDenge. There are a number of other
614 clans and large lineages living in the tribal territory, apart from small
stranger groups and individuals. The two most powerful of these stranger
clans are the Karuoth and Kakan (JokAnyango). Other clans or lineages
of some importance are the KaLuo, JoMar, JoAgoro, JokOgelo, KaNyinek,
KaRapol (JoKato), JoUmala, KaLikada, and JoUyawa. The presence of
these clans and lineages in Alego and their intra-tribal relations with the
JoAlego are accounted for in a number of traditions or myths. These
myths relate that when Alego entered the country from the west (Yimbo
or Kadimo) he found there a people called Kombekombe and they and
Alego's people live together in peace. Then the Kombekombe people be-
gan to disperse and were lost and the whole of the land came into posses-
sion of Alego and his sons. Then came other clans after Alego into the
country but Alego fought them and compelled them to settle elsewhere.
Then the elder sons of Mulijuok crossed the gulf and settled in what
is now called South Kavirondo and Mulijuok was left with his younger
children, Seje, Nyidenge, and three daughters, Nyiwat, Anyango, and
Ajonga.

Other clans now entered the country with the permission of the Alego
folk (the story is told by them). Came Ragak and married Nyiwat and
Anyango and begat the clan of the Kakan, who count as *orche*, in-laws,
to the JoAlego. Then came Ager (from Kadhola or Budama) and asked
Mulijuok for permission to settle on the land and Mulijuok agreed that
he and his people might live on hill Akara. When Mulijuok died Ager
plotted to kill his sons Seje and Nyidenge to wrest the soil from them.
Seje heard of this plot and summoned Nyinek, Uyawa, Agoro, Ragak,
and others (the lineages are personified in the story) to make war against

the people of Ager, whom they defeated. Ager later asked for the hand of Ajonga by whom he begat the Karuoth clan, who also stand to the Alego folk as relatives-in-law. The genealogy given below illustrates the story. From Mulijuok to the present day there are nine to ten generations. Other stories, which I do not recount here, explain the relations between the Kakan and the JoUyawa and other clans in Alego tribal territory. In these myths the tribal structure is presented in terms of lineages and the lineages are personified.



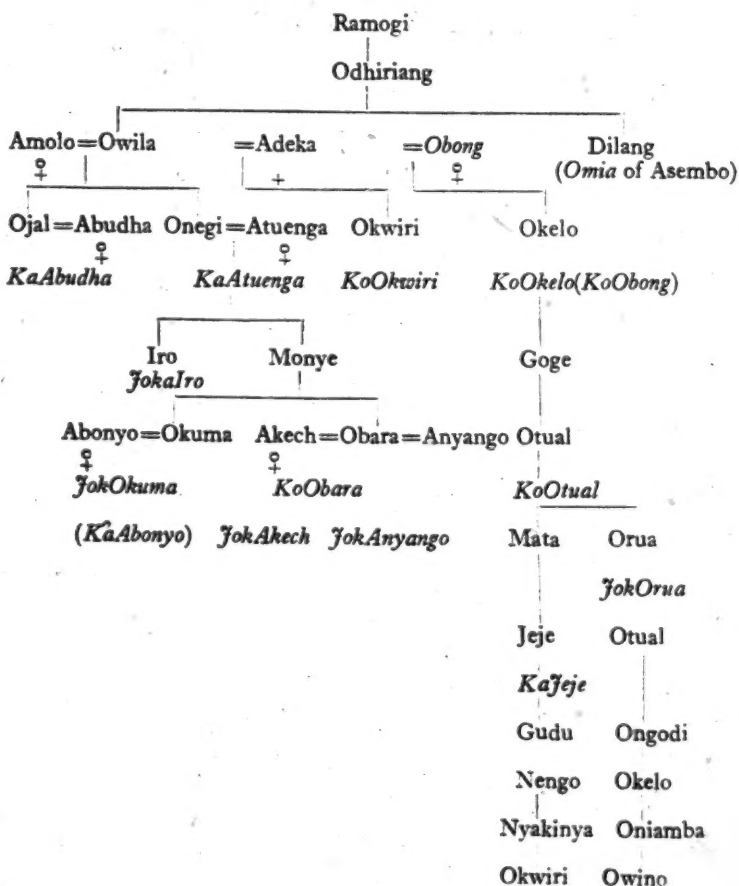
The JoAlego genealogy has been presented in its simplest form, pruned of all subsidiary branches. The JoOwila clan is shown in slightly fuller form to illustrate better the lineage structure of a typical Luo clan. The JoOwila are the dominant clan in Uyoma (pop. 11,694, density 91.3). Owila, the ancestor of the clan, came from Alego and brought with him the various clans now living in Uyoma together with the people who now occupy Asembo (where the dominant clan are the Kale) to which country the Uyoma people drove them after a quarrel. Though there are many stranger lineages living in Uyoma its population is probably less mixed than is the case in most tribal areas.

The JoOwila clan divides into four main branches or maximal lineages, as shown in the chart below, the JokOkelo or JokObong being the senior line. These four lineages do not intermarry. Each owns a distinct part of the tribal territory though the members of one lineage are frequently found living in the territory of another. The KaAtuenga and KaAbudha, having the same ancestress regard themselves as a single segment in relation to KoOkelo and KoOkwiri. Genealogical links through females with stranger lineages living with the clan are not shown on the chart.

The relativity of lineage values, to which I have given some attention in my book on the Nuer, may here be touched on, using the JoOwila

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clan as an illustration. Lineage names are in italics. Only one line is shown to its full depth. When Okwiri is asked what is his lineage in his tribal area he will probably say: '*dho odwa KoOtual*', 'my lineage are the Ko-Otual'. If further asked: 'Which branch of the Ko-Otual?' ('*Ko-Otual ma dho ot mani*') he would reply: '*KoOtual ma KaJeje*' and in situations in which KaJeje stand opposed to JokOrua he would probably give KaJeje as his lineage in the first instance. When speaking of the Jok-Akech or any other medial lineage he would call himself a KoOtual man. In speaking of the KaAbudha or another of the maximal lineages he would call himself a member of the KoOkelo lineage. This feature of the lineage systems is too well known to be elaborated further.



In Seme (pop. 29,919, density 311.6) the dominant clan is the Ka-Nyikal, the main divisions of which are the Kadepir and the KaGumba, Gumba being a foundling adopted and brought up by Nyikal. I omit a genealogy of this clan for reasons of space but would draw passing attention to the common feature of lineage systems by which stranger lineages are grafted into the structure of the dominant clan of the tribe by mythological fictions. The KaGumba, to whom I have just alluded, is a very powerful lineage. Another strong lineage in Seme are the KaYila. According to the myth Yila was an Alego man who took to the bachelors' hut Amolo daughter of Nyikal and made her pregnant. He then fled the country. Amolo was an Amazon with a will of her own and she later went to fetch her lover and brought him back to Seme with his sons from whom are descended lineages, by a wife whom he had married in his exile. Another big clan in Seme are the Kolunje. Nyikal had a servant called Anam who used to take his sons to the edge of the lake to collect fodder for the calves. One day they found there a man called Onyango. Nyikal adopted this stranger together with Anam, and Kolunje is the joint name for their descendants, the KaAnam and the KoOnyango.

The last clan of the structure of which I shall give an outline are the KaRacuonyo. Jok, who appears to be the same as the Mulijuok of the Alego myth, begat two sons. One of them, Cuanya, is the ancestor of the principal lineages in the tribal areas of Kisumu, Kanyamwa, Kabwoc, Karungu, and Kadem. The other is the ancestor of the KaRacuonyo clan, who are dominant in the locations of Karacuonyo (Kaduog), Mumbo and Kabondo. According to the Alego myth there were two other brothers, Seje and Nyidenge, as has been noted, but these are not given in their genealogies by the people to the south of the gulf. According to some the ancestor of the now Bantuized Wanjare was another of Jok's sons.

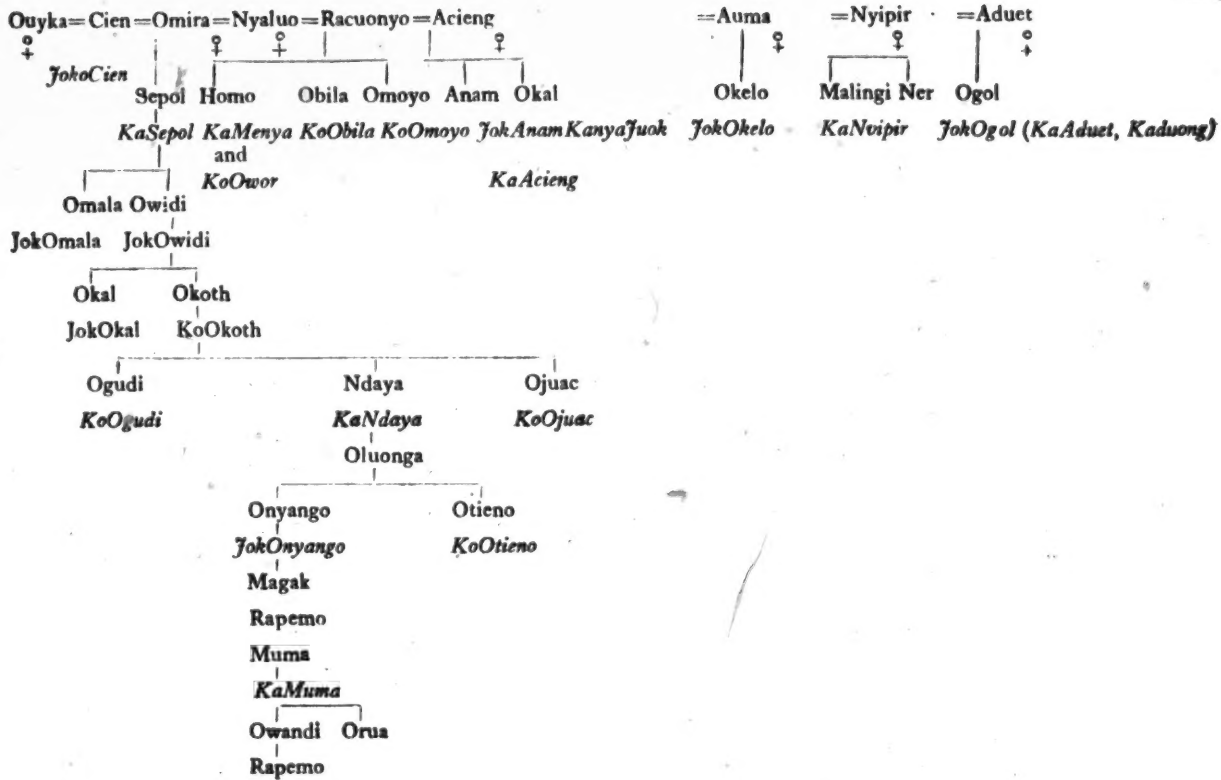
The story current to the south of the gulf is that Jok was accidentally killed by his sons in an elephant hunt. A certain man called Cien took Racuonyo and made him his servant and after various adventures together adopted him as his son. When Cien died Racuonyo took one of his wives, Omiri, and by her begat Sepol, who is the ancestor of the dominant lineages in the Kabondo and Mumbo tribal divisions, the Joko-Owidi and the JokOmala. According to Luo custom Sepol was a son of the dead Cien and not of Racuonyo but the sons of Cien said they did not wish him to be known by the name of their father, so he was called after Racuonyo. The descendants of Cien by a different wife claim to be the owners of the Mumbo lands, but they are now a very small people, due it is said to their having insulted their father who haunted them after his death. The descendants of Racuonyo are shown in the chart below. Only the principal lineages are given, except in the line of descent to one man for illustration.

The man Rapemo can, according to the context, describe his lineage as KaMuma, JokOnyango, KaNdaya, KoOkoth, JokOwidi, KaSepol, and KaRacuonyo.

Each of the big lineages of the KaRacuonyo clan owns its own part of the tribal territory and within a section owned by a large lineage the

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[p. 36]

613 parts owned by its branches are fairly distinct. Inter-marriage is the main
614 cause of inter-settlement and marriage within this clan is not permitted.

There are a number of stranger lineages in Karacuonyo (Wagwe, Kamwala, Kakmuno, Jokadeio, etc.) but they are small lineages and so much inter-married with the dominant KaRacuonyo clan that they have no territorial and political distinctness. Some attention must now be given to the status of stranger lineages to the dominant lineage within a tribe.

We have noted that in Karacuonyo there are few stranger lineages and that they are weak ones. By far the greater majority of the tribe are members of the dominant clan. Other tribal territories display greater clan admixture and the presence of powerful stranger lineages whose numerical importance is reflected in the tribal myths. A European may not quickly become aware of these stranger elements unless land disputes force his attention to them, for the dominant clan is generally identified linguistically with the tribe. JoAlego means both the tribesman of Alego tribal territory and the patrilineal descendants of Alego and KaRacuonyo means both the tribesmen of Karacuonyo tribal territory and the patrilineal descendants of Racuonyo. Therefore if a man of the JoMur stranger lineage in Alego were asked outside Alego to what people he belongs he would reply that he belonged to the Alego folk, but if he were asked within the tribal territory he would say that he was a JoMur, for the JoMur are a distinct agnatic group living in their own portion of country within Alego.

613 Now, from the point of view of the dominant clan in a tribal area the
614 members of this clan alone are the *jopiny* or *jogweng*, the people of the
609 land and the owners of it, and the rest are *jodak*, the separated people, the strangers: though if they lived among them a long time they speak of them as *jobedo*, for *jodak* is a harsh word.

613 These stranger lineages are grafted into the lineage structure of the
609 dominant clan so that through recognition of female links the whole tribe
614 may be regarded as a system of cognatic lineages. Luo speak of the affiliated lineages as *kaorce*, lineages of in-laws, or as *kaner*, lineages of maternal uncles, since it is from them that they take their wives and the mothers of their children. As the affiliated lineages have taken wives from the dominant clan they also come into the category of *okewa*, sister's son, to its members. In this way every lineage in a tribe, whether of the dominant clan or of stranger stock, has a structural position in the system of lineages of which a tribe is composed and of which the lineages of the dominant clan are the framework.

578 The lineages of the clan which owns the tribal territory and those
613 affiliated to it seem in the past to have been on a general social equality
614 and to have acted corporately in matters of common tribal interest, particularly in war against other tribes. They were differentiated only in matters of ritual, marriage regulations, and, as explained earlier, in settlement of homicide. In recent years, however, acute differences have arisen about land in those parts of the country where the density of population is greatest, especially in the most northern tribes of Central

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Kavirondo, between the different lineages, sometimes between a lineage of the dominant clan and sometimes between two stranger lineages.

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In the past there seems to have been no serious difficulty about land; there was plenty of it and more could be acquired by war and migration. People were glad, I was told, to welcome strangers who added to the fighting strength of their community and who provided them with wives for their sons. The strangers settled as *orce*, in-laws, and become maternal uncles and sisters' sons. Personal relations between the members of the lineage of the dominant clan and the strangers who settled among them and intermarried with them were all of a kinship order. But these relationships of a kinship kind are structural points at which affiliated lineages are grafted on to the tree of descent of the dominant clan. Personal relations give place to structural relations. People do not readily quarrel with their own parents-in-law or maternal uncles or sisters' sons about land, but when the pressure of population becomes acute they may dispute with those who count as lineage in-laws, lineage maternal uncles, or lineage sisters' sons, that is to say when the relationship has become a structural one and ceased to be one of an intimate kinship kind, for intermarriage and thereby the formation of new kinship links between a lineage and another living on its land must for reasons of exogamy become less and less. There is a bit difference between a member of the JoSeje lineage of Alego and a man of a stranger lineage whom he calls sister's son in a personal sense and a man whom he calls sister's son in a structural sense.

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Hence we find to-day in the overcrowded tribal areas considerable inter-lineage enmity about land. If it is not a new feature of Luo life it has certainly been accentuated by European rule and restrictions. Tribal cohesion has suffered from peace and land hunger has increased disharmony.

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The *jopiny* claim the land in virtue of their ownership of the tribal territory and point to their *gundini*, their ancient homestead sites, which are remembered for many generations, and to the graves of their ancestors in the disputed area. But stranger lineages which have grown numerous and powerful may also claim to be *jopiny* in the same area in that they have resided there for many generations and also can point there to their ancestral homestead sites and the graves of their forebears. Sometimes a second stranger lineage have grown strong at the expense of a first and pushed them off their lands, so that three lineages can lay claim to the district. Problems of this kind were arousing much feeling in Alego during my visit, for there land is becoming scarce. They may be further complicated by the fact that the present dominant clan has in the past ousted a clan once dominant in the territory and who also have in the land their homestead sites and graves, for it is held by all Luo that title deeds to lands are ancient homestead sites and ancestral graves and that a man has a right to ask for land to cultivate in the district where his ancestors lived and are buried. This does not mean that a man can come back from the tribal area in which his family have lived for several generations to that in which his earlier forebears lived and claim the land

on which a *gunda*, homestead site, of one of them is situated ; but it means that he has a right to cultivate somewhere in that district. There is in this way an overlapping of rights in a territory.

Among the Luo ownership of agricultural land is vested in the lineage and every member of a lineage which owns an area has the right to cultivate in it. The individual has only rights of use, which are hereditary so long as the land is maintained in use ; but a man cannot sell the land, for his whole lineage and maybe other lineages as well have rights in it ; nor can he reclaim it if he has left it for some years and it is being cultivated by another man. Grazing land (*pap*) is always common. An individual can share his agricultural land with kinsmen, such as a daughter's husband or sister's son, and stranger lineages take root in the soil in the first instance through a personal tie of this kind. Sometimes a lineage of strangers flourish at the expense of the lineage whose forebears first gave permission to their ancestors to cultivate the soil and they begin to get a grip on the land and to count their graves and homestead sites in it. Or the lineage which owns the land increases and wants more land for its own members but finds that the land it wants is under cultivation by the descendants of strangers who now regard it as theirs by right and they begin to contest their occupation of it. They cannot directly challenge their use of the land nor just oust them from possession while they are using it, but they encroach on their cultivations and by constant pressure try to squeeze them out. The strangers have redress before European constituted courts but if they are weak they do not care to resort to them because they know that even if they win the case they must continue to live among their more powerful neighbours against whom they have proceeded. For such situations one cannot find rulings in past custom and when disputes of this kind occur to-day settlement depends on a variety of factors, the strength of the stranger lineages, their wealth, their influence with the chiefs and their ability to bribe them, and so forth.

This paper is sketchy and the survey on which it is based was superficial. Those investigating the Luo at the present time will doubtless give a fuller, more accurate, and more balanced, account of their social organization. Nevertheless, the enquiry has served its limited purpose in that it has shown that Luo political structure with its lineage framework is in essential characteristics like that I have recorded for the Nuer. There are some differences, which I hope to discuss soon in a comparative study of Nilotic lineages as a contribution towards that study of lineage system on a broader African and world-wide basis which research is slowly making possible. However, it may not prove easy to determine whether the differences are significant till an intensive study of the Luo has been made. All this paper claims to do is to show that the Luo have the same type of structure as the Nuer. Recent research has demonstrated that both Anuak and Shilluk have a lineage structure though it is

LINEAGE FORMATION AMONG THE LUO

I. THE SETTING

THE Luo people constitute the third largest tribal unit in eastern Africa, and are by far the largest of the Nilotic-speaking peoples, numbering, by 1947 estimates, some 800,000 individuals. They are entirely contained within the three Kavirondo Districts of the Nyanza Province of Kenya except for some thousands who have now crossed its southern border into the Musoma District of the Lake Province of Tanganyika. ¹⁰¹ [61]

In terms of racial distribution the Luo are the spearhead of the great southward thrust of the Nilotic peoples from the Sudan, and of this spearhead the Luo of South Kavirondo and Tanganyika are the tip. The nearest Nilotic neighbours of the Luo are the Padhola of the Eastern Province of Uganda, whose territory comes within a few miles of the northern Luo boundary; but linguistically their nearest relatives are the Alur who now live 300 miles away, partly in the south-western corner of the West Nile District of Uganda and partly over the border in the Belgian Congo. In geographical terms the Luo occupy the coastal plains which border Kavirondo Gulf and the open expanse of Lake Victoria for fifty miles or so on either side of the entrance to the gulf, and also the foothills and uplands to which these plains give way a few miles inland. Although their territory forms a continuous block all round the gulf, it bears no correspondence to the boundaries of the North, Central, and South Kavirondo Districts, but within each of these consists respectively of 1 out of 19, 14 out of 13, and 19 out of 30 locations.¹ These locations form the territory of lineages or groups of lineages.² ¹³¹

II. PRELIMINARY ARGUMENT

THE purpose of this article is to document certain aspects of the theoretical relationship of lineage to family; to demonstrate and interpret the structural importance of females in a system based on strict patrilineal descent; to show the divergence between norm and practice in Luo lineage concepts and Luo lineage activities; and to explain the process by which new lineages of different types are formed by reference to current or recent examples.³ ¹²¹

If formally questioned on the point, Luo would admit that the members of a lineage are all the agnatic descendants of its founding ancestor, both male and female, living and dead. However, as Mayer remarks (see *The Lineage Principle in Gusi Society*, I.A.I. Memorandum XXIV, p. 7), 'it is no straightforward matter to define the lineage allegiance of women', and the operative members of a lineage in its observable activities are not those who would have to be included in it according to a strict ⁶¹³ ¹²¹

¹ The word 'location' is in Kenya applied to the territorial subdivisions of administrative districts and has a quite different connotation from that with which it is used in the Union of South Africa and elsewhere.

² See Evans-Pritchard, 'Luo Tribes and Clans', *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal*, No. VII, where these groups are described.

³ For now, see next page.

[p. 5]

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theory of agnatic descent. Most prominent in lineage activities are the group of living male agnates. Dead females, though technically lineage members by descent from the founder in the male line, are of no importance since no segments in their own lineage of origin can ever spring from them. Their only significance was during their lifetime, when they returned from the lineages into which they had married to participate in the rituals of the lineage of their birth. On the other hand, dead females who married into the lineage from outside it, and became eponyms of new lineage segments, are of lasting importance to the lineage as the genealogical points by reference to which parts of the internal articulation of the lineage are defined in theory, and upon whom the grouping of its living members is consequently based in practice. Living females who have married into the lineage are important to it, not only because after death they may become lineage eponyms, but because while alive they are already the heads of groups which Luo regard in theory as the prototypes of lineage segments and, in practice, they are the actual organizers of activities which are both the result and the demonstration of the segmentary principle (see below, p. 37).

The importance of the family to the lineage is shown by the fact that Luo regard every segmentary relationship as having its symbolic prototype within the compound polygynous family. The essential principle of lineage activity is the opposition of co-ordinate segments to one another, coupled with their unity within the same superordinate, itself in similar opposition to other co-ordinates and bound with them in the unity of a still higher superordinate. To the Luo the prototype of this process of segmentation is that aspect of the family cycle (see below, p. 37) in which elementary families are opposed major segments within their superordinate polygynous family, and superordinate segments in relation to the sons who compose them, which sons are themselves the starting-points of major segments in relation to these elementary families. Wives may consequently be considered as the heads of superordinate segments to their sons and of subordinate segments to their husbands. It is important to note that either prototype is equally valid for the Luo; sons in relation to their mother, or co-wives in relation to their husband. Therefore daughters are seen to be of no structural significance though members of the lineage

* I have used the following conventions of terminology:



The points numbered in the accompanying diagram represent the eponymous ancestors of a hypothetical series of lineage segments arranged in their genealogical order.

All the segments of series II are co-ordinate, and similarly with series III and series IV.

The segments of series III are all subordinates of

segment IIc, and similarly segment IIIc is the superordinate of all the segments in series IV.

The relationship between co-ordinate segments of the same superordinate is expressed in the Luo concept of *ibanda*, and I refer to it as their theory of co-ordination.

PRELIMINARY ARGUMENT

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according to a strict theory of descent, while wives are fundamental to the structure from the start. From the point of view of lineage activity it is indeed true that recruitment to the lineage is of men by descent and of women by marriage.¹ It is the final rite in the sequence of marriage ceremonies which definitively transfers a woman's reproductive powers to her husband's lineage (see below, p. 35, *Rite*). For the Luo, we cannot abstract a man and his sons from the family as the microcosm of lineage,² for this is found conceptually—as Luo terminology shows (see below, p. 27)—either in the sons of one mother or the co-wives of one husband. Only when the ideal of family composition is not achieved, because a man fails to beget male issue by more than one wife, or because wives fail to bear more than one son each, can the actual prototype of lineage segmentation be simply a man and his sons. The ideal of family composition, displaying both the segmentary prototypes conceptualized by the Luo, must therefore be regarded as a man with more than one wife, each of whom has more than one son.

What has been said about lineage and family largely explains the other purposes of this article. That the Luo conceptualization of lineage structure in family idiom is something more than a trick of projection is shown by a study of property ownership, marriage, and inheritance in relation to the family. A sufficient account is therefore given of the family system (pp. 16-25) to show the direct influence which these matters can have on the formation of new lineages. The jural arrangements of the family are further correlated with the actual pattern of residence, with the functional alignments of family members to one another, the primary attitudes acquired in early infancy, and the subsequent moulding of these, during the whole period of maturation, into a motivational system which is at once consistent with, and productive of, a segmentary social structure.

In any society structure is an abstraction from observed behaviour, including verbal behaviour, which has a certain degree of continuity over space and time. This behaviour is, obviously, the net result of motivations in the individuals living together in that society. If the society is not changing these will be consistency between the structural behaviour of one generation and the next. A family is, in particular, a direct result of the structural behaviour of a few individuals. But it is also, in general, the result of motivations imposed on the individuals who create it, by a system of upbringing which is itself part of the structured behaviour transmitted from the past. In Luo terms, then, a lineage is the net resultant of a certain type of structural behaviour on the part of all its members from the time of the birth of its founder down to that of its living members. But the activities of its founder were partly determined by the particular characteristics of the family into which he was born, and by the general structural characteristics which determined the form of family composition and child-rearing in it, back from the present to the time of the lineage founder, and long before that.

The reason why I stress certain aspects of the family as the point of departure for describing the lineage system is that such an approach seems to be called for by the material itself, yet it has received less emphasis than the other, in which lineages are treated mainly as groupings inherited from the past, and the structural aspects

¹ See Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

² Cf. Pottier, *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, p. 32.

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[p. 14]

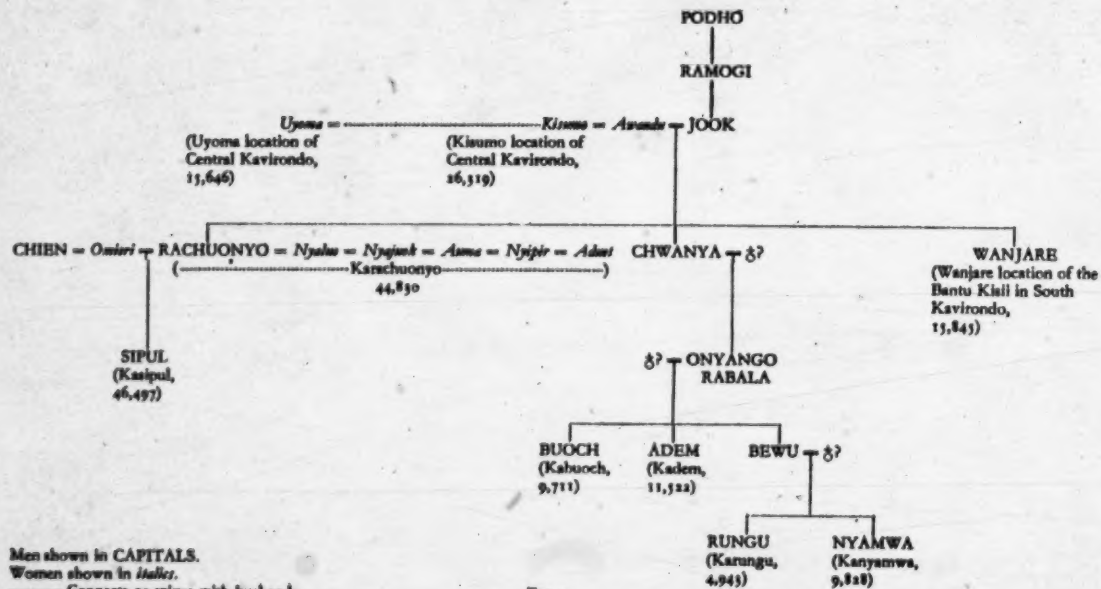


FIG. 1

PRELIMINARY ARGUMENT

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the divergences are glossed over and the relations of segments treated in the same kinship idiom as if the implied regularities had been maintained.

I now proceed to the more detailed description of those features of the Luo family which aid in the interpretation of the lineage system. The lineage concepts of the



FIG. 3

Luo are then discussed, and six cardinal principles abstracted from them. Some statistics are given to show the divergence of lineage activities from the norms implied in the concepts and from the genealogical structure itself. More details are given of the nature of segmentary activity within the extended family, between the extended families of whose members the smaller lineage segments are composed, and between the larger lineages. Lastly, an interpretation is given of the transformation of class B into class A segments as small landholding lineages, from which

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originate all the larger lineages which provide the political framework of Luo society.

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My illustrations of Luo lineage structure are taken from material on one large lineage group, that of Karachuonyo. This group inhabits the present locations of Karachuonyo and Kasipul, and in 1947 had a population of 90,000. I lived here from December 1946 till March 1947 and again for the month of September 1947. On each occasion I took with me a Luo student from Makerere College as interpreter and research assistant. I went through my material with a dozen or more of the Luo students at Makerere who themselves came from a number of different locations.

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Clearly, from such a short period in the field, my results are not complete, but in so far as they add to the information at present available, I present them for what they are worth. The map (Fig. 3) shows all the Luo locations of South Kavirondo, those of the Karachuonyo group and of the other lineages which claim descent from the common ancestors, Jook and his wife Awandu, being shown in heavy type.

III. THE FAMILY

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THE most prominent cultural features of the Luo landscape are the euphorbia hedges, at stages of growth varying from that of 3-foot saplings to that of 30-foot trees, dating each site by their planting at the time of first occupation, and throwing a thick green wall round the cluster of huts within. This residential unit is the *dala* or *parcho*, and will be referred to as the homestead. The dwelling-huts ranged in a circle round the inside of the hedge are those of married women, the chief wife's hut being at the side opposite to the entrance through the hedge, and the huts of subsequent wives arranged in alternate succession on either side of that of the chief wife.¹ The husband and head of the homestead divides his time between the huts of his wives, the chief wife's hut taking precedence,² having no other quarters of his own except an *abila*, a smaller hut usually in the centre of the circle, which was his only place of privacy. There is a belief that if the husband leaves the homestead to escape from the bickering of his wives he will die on re-entering it, and the *abila* provides him with a safer sanctuary. It was also a vantage point from which he could keep a watchful eye on his cattle in the nearby kraal. The homestead is the spatial correlate of the compound polygynous family and is subdivided into the households of its component elementary families. Just as *dala* or *parcho* applies both figuratively to the social group and concretely to the homestead occupied by it, so *or* applies both to house and to the household of wife and children occupying it. The title of the head of the homestead and its family group is *won dala* or *won parcho*; *jaduong* (elder) may be substituted for *won*. Correspondingly, each wife is *won or*, signifying that she is head of the household, proprietress of its hut and all other effects, and leader of its domestic and economic activities. The word *won* is usually translated as 'father', and is in fact the classificatory term for all agnates of the generation senior to the speaker, including the 'genitor'. But its use with reference to all married women,

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¹ See Gluckman in *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, ed. Radcliffe-Brown and Forde. The Luo family has a 'house-property complex' of the Zulu type but in a less extreme form.

² This is often striking in ritual. The husband's most valuable possessions are also kept there. With

the present changes in hut design the chief wife's hut is often of the new and more pretentious rectangular pattern, while a second wife's may also be rectangular but smaller, and the third wife's still of the traditional circular type.

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842 said that since property has passed to the lineage of a wife it has no claim on her offspring, consequently they take their father's lineage affiliation and can always be claimed by him because they result from his semen.

595 The Luo conceptualization of primary kinship attitudes is in conformity with the patterns of actual behaviour briefly outlined. The relation of co-wives is visualized as one of jealous rivalry. The term for it in Dholuo is *nyiego* and co-wives refer to one another as *nyieka*.¹ From co-wives themselves this relationship tends to spread to the elementary families of which they are the female heads. Children stick up for their mother's rights over against those of a stepmother. They stand to gain all round from successful competition with the other elementary families of their homestead. This is not of great permanent importance to the daughters, but the sons have everything that is worth while to gain or lose in their rivalry with the groups of their half-brothers. Their inheritance of the most valuable and essential property—livestock and land—depends on the allocation made by their father between the elementary families. But for uterine brothers it also depends on the allocation made between them within their elementary family. Consequently uterine brothers have material reasons for competing with one another, and also for combining together to compete with all other groups of uterine brothers in their compound family, being reinforced in this solidarity by the coincidence of their mother's interests against her co-wives. These pivotal relationships within household and homestead are conceptualized by the Luo as the origin of lineage structure. It might be objected that the orientations noted here are of a kind which naturally tend to be latent in any polygynous family system. The point is, however, that such orientations not only occur in the Luo family but are expected to occur; that the pattern of residence, the kinship terminology, the general conduct of family affairs, and the usual behaviour of its members all reflect this particular alinement rather than any other of a number of alinements possible in polygynous families, and are consciously thought to do so.² The main features are represented diagrammatically below (see p. 21).

006 It is impossible, within the space of this article, to give a full account of marriage types and contracts, the system of inheritance and of succession to property and authority, exogamy, blood-feuds, ancestor worship, and the like. All these matters have a bearing on lineage organization, and I try to give here a brief general account of them, sufficient only to make clear the nature of their connexion with the other material presented.³

613 582 Exogamy is an attribute of the maximal lineage.⁴ This study is mainly concerned

¹ *nyiego* v., to snatch suddenly, or take by surprise; *nyiego* n., the relation of co-wives, jealousy; *nyieka* n., my co-wife, my partner in jealousy.

[17] ² In fact there are great similarities in this respect with the family structure of the Kikuyu, Kamba, and other East African peoples, but unfortunately the material on them does not tell us to what extent it is reflected in their lineage systems. Compare also Mayer, op. cit., p. 6. The most valuable comparative treatment of family structure from this angle is that of Fortes, *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*, cap. iii, and *The Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 195-6 note and p. 198.

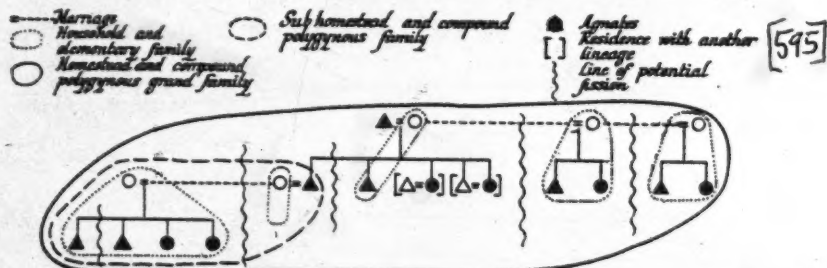
³ For further details see Paul Mboya, 'Luo Kinship and Timbego' (*East African Standard*, Nairobi), an English translation of which is to be published under the auspices of the East Africa Literature Bureau. See also Evans-Pritchard, 'Marriage Customs of the Luo of Kenya', *Africa*, vol. xx, 1950, p. 132.

⁴ A Luo maximal lineage, as the most inclusive agnatic descent group based on an accepted and putatively continuous genealogy, may coincide with 'clan', or it may be a segment within it where clan refers to a group united by a sentiment of common descent without this explicit genealogical basis.

THE FAMILY

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with one maximal lineage, which includes the lineage segments whose territories are marked on the map (Fig. 3) as the locations of Karachuonyo, Kasipul, Kabuoch, Kanyamwa, Karungu, and Kadem.¹ These lineages all claim patrilineal descent by a recognized genealogy from Awandu the wife of Jook, an ancestor from nine to twelve generations of ascent from elders still alive. This is an exceptionally large exogamous group and has no parallel even among the Luo, with their very wide tracing of marriage bars. Its present population is about 120,000, including a small percentage of settlers (*jodak*) from other lineages. The ban on intermarriage is still observed throughout this group except for the *jodak*. Its major segments would



probably have separated from one another completely and ceased to claim effective common descent, if it had not been for the tendency of European administration to crystallize the relations of maximal lineages at about the stage they had reached when outside control was first imposed over half a century ago. Since that time the population of the group has probably doubled to reach its present size. It is regarded by all the Luo as one of the most important and most authentically Luo groups among them. Since, as the map shows, the territories of its major segments are not contiguous, but form three separate blocks, their day-to-day activities have become similarly divided; I deal chiefly with the block formed by the locations of Karachuonyo and Kasipul, which have a population of 90,000. The lineages of both these locations claim agnatic descent from Rachuonyo, and will be referred to together as Karachuonyo. (They were, in fact, called East and West Karachuonyo by the British administration until recently.) Karachuonyo people can intermarry with the lineages of the surrounding locations—Nyakach, Gem, Kanyada, and Kagan (see map, Fig. 3)—as well as with the groups of *jodak* who have been permitted by them to settle within their territory.²

Cases of murder between Karachuonyo and other lineages would—before the British administration—have occasioned blood-feuds between them in which the

¹ Wanjare is also included, but these people separated from the Luo and were incorporated into the Bantu Kisi.

² There are only three considerable groups in Karachuonyo which are not agnatic descendants of Rachuonyo: Kanyadhiang' (1157), Wagwe (1754), and Kamwala (400); see Fig. 1. Tradition accounts

for them as descended either from wanderers who became dependants of Karachuonyo families or from orphan castaways discovered and reared by them. In either case they married Karachuonyo girls, as is almost inevitable in a system of localized exogamous lineages. They therefore rank as sister's son's lineages to Karachuonyo.

613 lineage of the murdered man endeavoured to kill a member of the murderer's lineage
628 in revenge. But the family of the murderer could forestall this process by offering
a girl or twelve head of cattle in compensation. If wilful murder occurs between
segments within the same maximal lineage, fighting may again occur and a member
of the murderer's segment be killed in revenge. Here it is impossible for a girl of
the group to be offered in compensation since she would be of the same maximal
lineage and exogamous group as the murdered man, and could not be married by
any kinsman of his. But the senior elder recognized by both segments calls a council
representative of both, and the murderer, if judged guilty, is supposed to be exiled.
When a man kills a close relative, belonging to his own minimal class A segment
of the maximal lineage, it is *masiru*—a ritual offence.¹ The murderer must bury his
relative and stay by the grave until *chola* (the first mourning period) is finished. He
must cohabit with the dead man's wife, if she has borne no children to her husband,
so that she may bear a child to be named after the dead and to guard his homestead.²

613 The level of groups between which marriage can take place thus corresponds to
673 the level at which general relations cease to be those prescribed between kinsmen,
682 and the groups with which marriage is possible tend to be those between which
688 hostility is the usual attitude. The Luo recognize this correlation, and regard *oche*
(in-laws) and *wasigu* (enemies) as almost interchangeable terms.

613 The normal form of marriage is negotiated by go-betweens on behalf of bride
582 and bridegroom with their respective families. A transfer of cattle has to be made
584 to the bride's family, the normal number being twelve. When the two families are
agreed as to the suitability of the match, the groom arranges for a party of his friends
to drag the bride from her home. The bride is expected to make a show of resistance
and weeping, but it is significant that the dragging must not take place when the
bride's parents are absent from the homestead. After the bride is thus brought to
the *simba* of the groom, the latter deflowers her in the presence of married men and
women witnesses; the tokens of her virginity are placed on potsherds and paraded
in triumph to the bride's home the next day and a feast is held there. If the bride
fails to prove her virginity in this way no feast is held, and one head of cattle less
is paid to her family. The real commencement of a marriage is said to be the groom's
sending of *roch kade* (the 'heifer of the stick'), which goes to the bride's mother, and
a bull to her father. Then comes the main payment, varying according to the wealth
of the two parties and to the general level of Luo wealth in cattle at the time, but
usually eight upwards. After this bride and groom live together for some time in
the latter's *simba*, and then the bride gets permission to return to her own home.
[582] The groom goes there with a heifer and a bull, and the feast of *kisera* is held. This
completes the statutory twelve cattle of the bridewealth. Bride and groom then return

¹ Some statistics of actual cases would be required to discover how far the level of segment within which murder is treated in this way coincides with that within which widows of kinsmen may be inherited and assistance given in marriage payments. My stay was too short for the collection of such statistics, but my impression was that such a coincidence is very vague, and it is certainly not consciously present in the minds of the Luo.

² Cf. Evans-Pritchard, *Some Aspects of Marriage and the Family among the Nuer*, pp. 5-10. Despite its importance among the Nuer, the obligation of ghost marriage is far from universal among Nilotic peoples. Among the Luo-speaking group it is not practised by the Kenya Luo nor by the Alur nor, probably, the Acoli.

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422 less as titular owner of the whole herd. The scheme of division may be represented
 582 as in the diagram below. All other livestock is divided in the same way. The eldest
 595 son of the first wife must marry before any other sons can do so, and if the first
 428 wife has no sons the rest must wait till there is no further chance of her bearing
 597 any. When the first wife dies, the second wife becomes chief wife of the homestead,
 but a first wife's full status can only be succeeded to when she is replaced by a sister
 and a new homestead is built. The property of a barren wife is inherited by a stepson
 who is adopted into her household to do the man's work in it.

CATTLE HERD

All herded together

Head of homestead titular owner of all

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1. *Cattle of the abila*

Strict property of homestead head.

*Cattle of the wives' houses*Most to *mikeyi*, next to *nyashira*, rest among
rero wives.

Used to help sons or brothers' sons to marry, or to marry new wives for homestead head.

Residue ultimately inherited by the youngest son of the homestead, who also takes the father's share of cattle from any subsequent marriages of sisters.

All derived from the heifer and bull taken by the father at every daughter's marriage, and from their increase.

Milk from these used by the homestead head.

2. Cattle strictly property of the wives.

Ultimately inherited by youngest son of each house.

All derived from the heifer called *roch kade* received by the mother at each daughter's marriage, and from the heifer of *atake* and bull settled upon a wife by her father at the end of her marriage ceremonies.

Milk from these used by the wives.

3. Cattle held for sons' marriages.

Any residue inherited by youngest son of each house.

All derived from the cattle received at daughters' marriages other than those specified under 1 and 2.

Homestead head has over all discretion in the original division of accruing cattle, and can persuade wives to give up cattle from category 3 to help stepsons to marry, and may by agreement take an extra heifer from those received at a daughter's marriage, to complete the bridewealth of one of his other wives.

592 Succession to authority in the family, and also in the lineage, depends on a combination of three qualifications: primogeniture, personal suitability in character and wealth, and appointment by one's predecessor. Primogeniture is highly regarded and preferred, but is never an absolute rule. Whenever an eldest son is unsuitable, or another agnatic relative is clearly more suitable, the latter is chosen to succeed. But a successor must be named by his predecessor, and as a result of the strong common sentiments in family and lineage segment, the predecessor's appointee seems usually to have been the one whom the elders of the group wish to elect when they meet at the funeral of the predecessor to confirm his choice.

769 Ancestor worship is falling into abeyance among the Luo of today. All those who go to school become at least nominal Christians, and this affects most of the young, while the old are becoming diffident in the performance of rites which no longer command universal respect. The spirit shrines which used to be placed between the first and second wives' huts are hardly seen today, nor the three stones which used to stand before the spirit shrine, with the stone of sacrifice buried beneath (see

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diagram, p. 17). It is therefore difficult to give a precise account of the relation between ancestor worship and lineage formation. It is noteworthy, however, that the ritual formula at a sacrifice was not spoken by any particular descendant of the recipient of sacrifice, but by any elders of his lineage present, who repeated it in turn while waiting for the sacrificial bull to urinate or excrete. If it refused to do this it was rejected and another substituted, and it was the elder who was repeating the formula at the moment when the bull urinated or excreted who had to make the sacrifice. The usual formula was *uorwa, luong' uorwa uchiemo*—'our father, call your father and eat'—followed by the bidding of a blessing on the particular matter in hand. In the funeral ritual more emphasis seems to be laid on insulating the living from the ill will of the dead than on securing the status of the latter in the other world. Similarly at any sacrifice, ancestors called to share are bidden to give the blessings for which they are asked on pain of being jeered at and despised. Children may be named, according to the father's judgement, after various circumstances or persons linked with the child's birth or ascertained in dreams. But if the child cries unusually the diviner (*ajwaga*) is called to discover which ancestor is seeking to have the child named after it. In this way the child may be named after its own father or mother, or any other relative, male or female. The same group of names tends to occur frequently in converging lines of ascent, especially those of famous ancestors, which are repeated particularly often, but there is no regular belief in the necessary reincarnation of ancestors in alternate generations.

[764]

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IV. LINEAGE CONCEPTS

The special terms which the Luo use for lineages show the distinctions which they make between different aspects of the activity of these groups. Frequently all these terms may be applied to the same group on different occasions depending on the context. The most important of these terms are *dhoot*, *gweng'*, *libamba*, and *anyuola*. *Gweng'* and *dhoot* are used of class A segments only, *anyuola* of class B segments only, and *libamba* may be used of either. The use of these terms is always logical when interpreted in relation to the structural position of the speaker, but their etymology does not always seem consistent with this unless it is understood in a symbolic sense. It may be best to give a general account of the usage and etymology of each one, followed by some quotations from informants.

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Dhoot (pl. *dhoodi*) is used for all those lineages which are corporate landholding units. They are the lineages already referred to as class A. Some idea of the variations in their size and population is given in the population figures included in Figs. 1 and 2, and the maps (Figs. 3, 4, and 5). They carry general social functions. Each manages its political, jural, economic, ritual, and other affairs through a council of elders representing its major segments and recognizing one of their number as leader. Organized on a territorial basis, they are the units of primary settlement or multiples of them,¹ responsible for the acquisition, apportionment, and use of land. They are the basis of a whole series of corporate group activities ranging from

¹ By settlement I mean simply a defined area of territory, containing the dwellings and all the land resources of a specified social group. The Luo have

no villages in the sense of recognized aggregations of dwellings larger than those of the family.

[361]

[text continues on p. 27]

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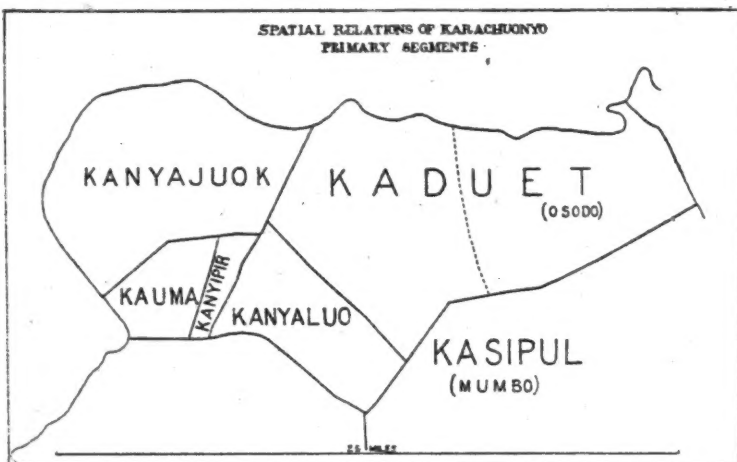


FIG. 4

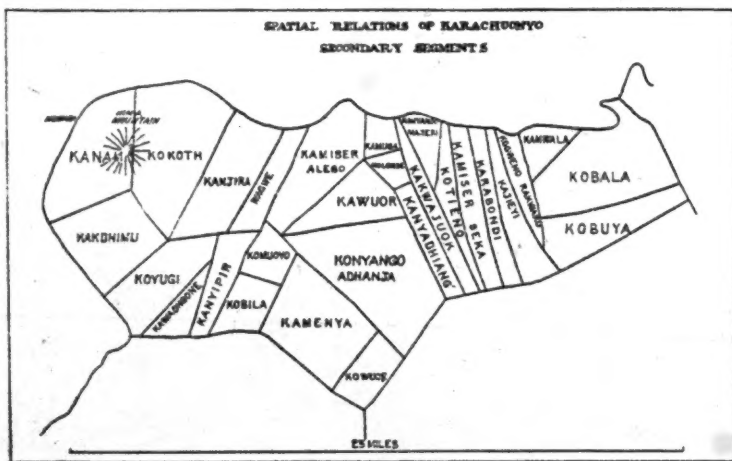


FIG. 5

[p. 26]

LINEAGE CONCEPTS

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friendly games of *adhula* (Luo hockey) between the smaller segments, through the wrestling and club-fighting of medium segments to the ritual warfare and open conflict of the larger lineages. Etymologically *dhoot* means 'mouth of house' (*dhoot*, mouth; *et*, house) and, as quotations will show, often refers to the issue of children from the doorway of their mother's hut. This might further imply a principle of matrilineal descent, but of this there is not the slightest trace among the Luo. All their lineages are essentially patrilineal, but the original ancestors from whom they spring, and whose names they bear, may be either men or women, depending on whether segmentation took place between brothers of an elementary family or co-wives of a compound family. The significance of this etymology, and of the Luo interpretation of it, seems to be that the unity of uterine brothers in their mother's house is to them symbolic of the solidarity of members of the same *dhoot*. But, as has been previously noted, uterine brothers are also regarded from the opposite point of view, as symbolic in their quarrels of the fission between lineage segments. Nor is this inconsistent, but is in line with the character of all Luo lineage segments, which in one context emphasize their unity against all outsiders and in another their internal divisions.

The *dhoot* of Karachuonyo is to its members the largest lineage which carries general social functions and which occupies one continuous block of territory. It is subdivided into smaller *dhoudi* down to the level of those which are the primary settlement units. This is the class A system of segmentation which, as previously noted, may be from twofold to sixfold, and is usually fivefold in Karachuonyo, according to the particular agnatic line taken. The points of origin of these *dhoudi* are only a small selection from the very large number of points of potential segmentation which appear in the whole genealogy of Karachuonyo (see large genealogical chart, Fig. 6, facing p. 32). For all uterine brothers, or co-wives with surviving male agnatic issue, from those of living families back to the earliest ancestors of the genealogy, represent points of fission in the class B segmentation, some of which have achieved class A status as *dhoudi*.

Karachuonyo as a *dhoot* is thus a group of people claiming common agnatic descent from Rachuonyo and subdivided at several successive levels into a number of smaller *dhoudi* all segmentally articulated. Karachuonyo as a continuous block of territory occupied and controlled by this group is also correspondingly subdivided, so that the arrangement of parts into a whole coincides in both cases. It is when they have the territorial aspect of a *dhoot* particularly in mind that the Luo refer to it as *gweng'* (pl. *gwenge*). The basic connotation is land, but the social group occupying the land is always implicit in the term *gweng'*. It would never be used for unclaimed or unoccupied land, which is *thim* (wilderness). Settlement, in the sense defined above is thus a reasonable translation of *gweng'*. In Karachuonyo all *gwenge* are thought of as being essentially lineage settlements. When the Luo have a territorial unit in mind as being the most inclusive of its kind, as they do in the case of Karachuonyo itself and occasionally in some contexts the *dhoudi* which are its major segments also, they refer to them as *piny* (country) rather than *gweng'*. The average population of minimal *gwenge* is approximately 300.

Dhoudi, which are major segments of the same superordinate lineage, refer to one another as *libamba* (pl. *libambini*). The etymology of this word is uncertain, and it

LINEAGE FORMATION AMONG THE LUO

601 may be of Bantu origin. The facility with which the Luo incorporate linguistic
 613 borrowings even in the case of fundamental concepts (e.g. *Nyasaye*, God; *wasign*,
 enemies, &c.) is in marked contrast to the persistence with which they have retained
 the other elements of their culture and imposed them on the non-Luo groups assimilated by them. The Luo sum up in the term *libamba* all those forces of friction and competition which weaken the solidarity of a lineage segment and lead to its further subdivision. The quarrels of uterine brothers and the jealousies of co-wives are regarded as typical of these. A *libamba* is, then, a rival lineage segment co-ordinate to one's own. When a man speaks of his *libamba* he always means a segment other than his own, but included in the same superordinate segment as is the one he has in mind as claiming his loyalty at that particular moment. It is those groups of *dhoudi* which stand in the *libamba* relationship to one another which play together at *adhula*, wrestle together, and fight together with clubs.¹

613 The lineages of class B remain passive except when called into action in connexion with certain ritual situations, and the chance of this occurring depends mainly on their genealogical position. Those which are below the level of the minimal *dhoot* and *gweng*, down to and including the members of compound and elementary families, are constantly being involved as groups in the many rituals which accompany marriages and funerals, the founding of new homesteads, the starting of cultivation, sowing and reaping, and the organization of other periodic affairs within the minimal *gweng*. The class B segments above this level only come into action haphazardly according to the incidence of ancestral sacrifices. When any social group is faced with a misfortune for which no specific remedy is recognized, a diviner (*ajwoga*) is consulted, and sacrifice made to the patrilineal ancestor indicated as responsible for the trouble.

613 769 Which one is selected depends on the gravity of the misfortune and the level of
 782 lineage grouping affected by it. The diviner is most likely to indicate one of the eponymous ancestors of *dhoudi* as they are most prominent in the minds of all. If, however, the eponymous ancestor of any other segment is indicated, it would emerge from its passivity into action. Even when it is the eponymous ancestor of a *dhoot* who receives sacrifice, some or all of its genealogical co-ordinates and subordinates may only be class B segments, and these would be called into action on such occasions since the sacrificing segment usually calls its co-ordinates to participate and is itself represented by its major segments.² All class B segments acting in this way, whether below or above the level of the minimal *dhoot*, are called *anywola*. Even a segment which is itself a *dhoot* and *gweng* may be called *anywola* in this context. The etymology of this word³ might well suggest a uterine principle of grouping. However, as with *dhoot*, every *anywola* is a patrilineal descent group, and whether it takes its name from a man or a woman depends on the genealogical incidence of co-wives and uterine brothers and the circumstances which call into action the agnatic groups

¹ Cf. the Tallensi concept of *sumos* (Fortes, *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 32, 37, 201). Here, too, there is the idea of a reciprocal relationship between co-ordinates, but to the Tallensi the chief emphasis is on the bond of unity resulting from ancestral brotherhood, whereas for the Luo it is on competitive subordination within a common superordinate. Co-ordinate segments are equally *libamba* to one

another whether their eponyms were co-wives or uterine brothers.

² See below, p. 33. Cf. Fortes's analysis of the same principle among the Tallensi (*The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, p. 31).

³ *nywola* n., birth; *nywola* v., to give birth. But it is possible to apply this root to procreation by men.

LINEAGE CONCEPTS

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derived from them. Here again it seems as if a whole series of groups were identified with one symbolic prototype, and the ideational qualities of the elementary family cell of mother and children are extended to much larger and differently derived groupings organized upon similar principles of solidarity. When *anywola* groups act in co-ordinate relationships they also may refer to one another as *libamba* in the same way as is done by *dhoudi*. But in the co-ordinate relationships of such class B *libembini* the competitive element is not so marked as the ordered marshalling of articulated segments in the achievement of a common purpose. Competitiveness still appears, however, in the haggling over shares of meat distributed at many rites.

Besides these generic terms lineages are referred to in particular by adding the prefix *ka* to the name of the eponymous ancestor. A lineage is said to be *Jokang'at'achiel*—people of one person—and a man's lineage affiliation is indicated by adding the personal prefix and the locative prefix to the lineage name, as *Jakarachuonyo*—a man of the lineage of *Rachuonyo*.¹ Luo paraphrase *ka* as *pacho* of so-and-so, using *pacho* in its figurative sense of the social group associated with a homestead; also, with their characteristic relativity, it can refer not merely to an actual homestead and its family, but to any lineage settlement however large, since all such must in theory be ultimately derived from the original homestead in which the eponymous ancestor lived.

Asked for the meaning of *dhoot* an elder usually leans back on his stool and points round the homestead at the doorways of his wives' huts as the concrete demonstration of what he says. Thus:

Obuya-Mboya of Konyango Adhanja:² 'If you have three wives and each has a number of children, and the children with their mothers scatter to different homesteads, they drop your name and take their mothers'. Obuya-Mboya is a great-grandson of Onyango Adhanja by his first wife Ambogo Nyamagari. As may be seen from the chart (Fig. 6) Onyango Adhanja (93) had three other wives besides Obuya's ancestress, and the descendants of all these have actually made separate settlements of their own called Kanyandiero, Kanyajwang', and Kobala, after these three wives. Obuya had also been speaking of his grandfather Mingusa, whose descendants also have their own settlement, and saying that as Kamingusa grew he would expect it to split up into three settlements named after Mingusa's three wives.

Oyugi-Mboya of Kanyariro said of *dhoot*: 'You get your *dhoot* first from your mother, then it changes in the grandchildren to the father. It is just a question of naming you after the mother from whom you were born.' Oyugi is a great-great-grandson of Nyariro (83), first wife of Ogweni (82) (Fig. 6). He refers to the fact that the elementary family of the mother's hut is the primary unit in the system of segmentation, within the secondary grouping of descent from a man by all his wives taken together. Derivation from father or mother may alternate in different generations, and where segments are derived from women it is simply a naming device for distinguishing between descent groups all of which are patrilineal, not the result of any special value attached to descent from women as opposed to men.

¹ *ja*, pl. *jo*, personal prefix; *ng'ato*, a person; *ka*, prefix of place; *achiel*, one.

² I hyphenate a second name to the first when it is the name of the individual's father; when it is the individual's nickname or a woman's patronymic I

add it without a hyphen. In either case, the addition of the second name serves to distinguish between the many individuals who have the same personal name.

613 Oyugi also said: 'A *dhoot* begins when the sons of one wife leave their father's *dala*, form a *dhoot*, and begin to compete.' It is this competition which sharpens the boundaries, ideological as well as physical, between *dhoudi* and strengthens their internal solidarity. Oyugi's own lineage illustrates his point with the separation of the descendants of Nyairo from those of her co-wife Gaya (84) (Fig. 6).

Obware-Akoko of Kamboya said of *libamba*: 'A man can produce two sons; those two usually, according to custom, leave their father's homestead and make their own near by. Each of them will produce sons and daughters; at one time there might happen a quarrel or disagreement, then one will say to the other: "Now you go away from me since now you are a *libamba* by yourself, and I am a *libamba*." So you find each multiplying and becoming a *libamba* on either side. *Libamba* is not used except when there is a quarrel. Usually a quarrel comes in dividing the bride cattle of a girl or girls when married, when in spite of the old man's distribution the sons dispute it.' Then he referred to his own *dhoot* of Kamboya and said that it had no quarrels and therefore no *libembini* within it, because it is *pako achiel*—a single homestead (figuratively, of course, for in fact it contains several dozen homesteads, and the original homestead of Mboya himself was probably deserted a century or so ago); but informally even two uterine brothers in a household can quarrel and one say to the other, 'you are my *libamba*'. Obware is a great-great-grandson of Mboya (98). The process of segmentation in his own lineage bears out his account of *libamba*, both in the separation of the descendants of Mboya from those of Omolo (100), and at the next level in the separation between Ogembo (91) and Onyango Adhanja (Fig. 6).

Oyugi-Mboya also said of *libamba*: '*Libamba* starts with quarrels between children of one wife and children of another.' This again follows the structure of his own lineage in the separation of the descendants of his ancestress Nyairo from those of her co-wife Gaya (84) (Fig. 6).

These statements, though at first confusing when taken together, do embody the cardinal principles of Luo lineage structure, and present some of the striking characteristics of Luo thought. This could be confirmed by many further quotations for which there is no room here. The main points may be summarized as follows:

1. Derivation

The eponymous ancestor of a lineage may be either a man or a woman.¹

[17] ¹ Contrast the discussion of male and female eponyms among the Arabs in Robertson Smith, *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*, pp. 28-38. Clearly the Arabian situation was different from that of the Luo. Female eponyms were only found among the earliest ancestors, and in every tribe which had a female eponym those of all its segments were male. By contrast, female eponyms appear at all levels in different Luo lineages, interspersed with male, and the reasons for it are deducible from a study of recent cases of lineage fission (see pp. 40 et seq.). Robertson Smith did not admit the relevance of present residential arrangements and pivotal family relationships to the development of future lineage segments, or

that the relations of persons within a family may in a very significant way be mirrored by the relations of large descent groups within a territorial unit. He suggests as a law of general validity that 'where the bond of maternity is so strong that it binds together the children of the same mother as a distinct kindred group against the other children of their father, there also we may be sure that the children of one mother by different fathers will hold together and not follow their father. And this is the principle of female kinship.' Both these situations can be demonstrated over and over again in Luo lineage structure, yet the Luo lineages are strictly unilateral in descent on the father's side. The application of terms whose ety-

LINEAGE CONCEPTS

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2. *Constitution*

The solidarity of the lineage (*dhoor*) is likened to that of the mother and her children in an elementary family. 613 ●

3. *Interrelation*

The relation of one co-ordinate segment with another (*libamba*) is likened to the competition between uterine brothers, and to the competition between the sons of one co-wife and the sons of another.

4. *Personalization*

Lineage segments are so closely identified conceptually with the individuals and family nuclei from which they are descended that the latter stand for the former in linguistic idiom.

5. *Compression*

The symbolizing of lineage processes in certain relations between the members of elementary and compound families in the homestead leads to:

- (a) Telescoping of the time sequence. Changes in lineage structure which took place a number of generations back and over a considerable period are treated as events among individuals of a family in an undifferentiated present.
- (b) Telescoping of spatial distance. Relations between large social groups or territorial sections are treated as occurrences within single households and homesteads.

6. *Egocentricity*

Lineages are spoken of in the context of the structural position of the speaker, and utterances about them can only be interpreted in this light.

V. NORM AND DEVIATION IN THE SEGMENTARY SYSTEM

GENEALOGICAL segmentation can only be adhered to with absolute consistency as a dominant principle of social organization in situations which allow the irregularities of lineage growth and their consequences to be ignored. On the whole, ritual situations conform to this requirement, whereas political, economic, and many other general social needs frequently do not. The result of this is that in Luo lineage organization it is the *anywala* groups of the class B system of segmentation that are able to conform most closely to the abstract principles suggested by their genealogical

mology implies derivation from females to groups derived from male ancestors is taken by Robertson Smith as conclusive evidence for a switch from matrilineal to patrilineal descent. Among the Luo the inference from both social action and traditional theory is that terms such as *dhoor* and *anywala*, whose etymology suggests descent from a woman, are applied sometimes to groups with female and sometimes to those with male eponyms because groups of both types are identical in social function, and

both alike reflect the cardinal attributes of these terms as shown in those situations which Luo adduce as symbolic demonstrations of their significance. [77]

The *anywala* and *anywala* (mother- and father-derived groups) of the Ibo are likely to afford an important comparative example, though the data on them are at present inadequate. It will be of great interest to know the real significance, for the social structure and for the process of segmentation, of these groups when they are fully analysed.

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structure, whereas the activities of the *dhoot* and *gweng* groups of the class A segmentation frequently diverge from them. The *anywela* groups within the minimal *dhoot*, being those of the least generation depth, have not existed long enough for the disparity of growth in different lines to become excessive, and this makes it easy for their activities to be consistently based on principles of genealogical segmentation. The class B segments above this level emerge only in ritual activity, in which disparity of size may be immaterial because the real balance of power of social groups is not an insistent factor on such occasions. But in the operations of *dhoot* and *gweng* the balance of power between groups is usually a fundamental element, and often the consciously predominating one. It is none the less true that, despite divergences in practice, the Luo do regard the mechanism of genealogical segmentation as the normal organizational basis of the relations of social groups. When actual practice conforms to this it is regarded as natural; when it departs from it the divergence is glossed over, and the relationships are described in the same idiom as if conformity had been maintained. Luo lineage principles must, therefore, like other social norms, be looked for both in the activities of lineage segments, where significant variations about the norm may be revealed, and also in the theoretical recognition which they have in the minds of the people, as part of their 'projective system' revealed in their verbal behaviour, and here they may present a regularity and consistency which is otherwise impossible in social action.

These practical divergences from lineage theory may be made clearer by showing the distribution of class A and class B segments and the co-ordinate relationships of *libembini* on an actual genealogy. The chart (Fig. 6) shows certain parts of the genealogy of Karachuonyo. It includes only ancestors belonging to generations already dead, the most recent one shown being Omolo (100), who is separated from the living head of Komolo by one intervening generation. Each of the following is the eponymous ancestor of a *dhoot* in the class A segmentation. Nos. 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 24, 25, 28, 29, 32, 34, 35, 36, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 51, 59, 60, 62, 65, 67, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 85, 86, 87, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101. These may now be divided into those which follow the *libembini* principle as recognized by the Luo in theory and those which do not. That is to say, those *dhooti* which are co-ordinate segments according to their genealogy, and those which are not genealogically co-ordinate although they act as if they were.

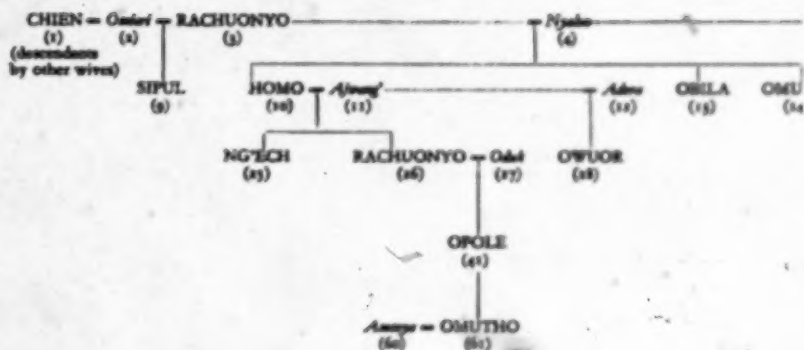
Nos. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 are co-ordinates, their superordinate being No. 3.

39, 40	"	"	"	24.
42, 43	"	"	"	44.
77, 78, 79, 80	"	"	"	81.
94, 95, 96, 97	"	"	"	93.
98, 100	"	"	"	92.
99, 101	"	"	"	100.

But,

Nos. 25, 60, 28, 13, 14 are not co-ordinates, though they are major segments of *dhoot* 4.
 15, 29, 44, 32 " " " " 3.
 34, 36, 24, 59, 75, 76, 81, 82, 85, 86, 87 are not co-ordinates, though they are major segments of *dhoot* 8.

It is to be noted that the following *dhooti* (Nos. 25 and 60, 9 and 4, 44 and 29, 62

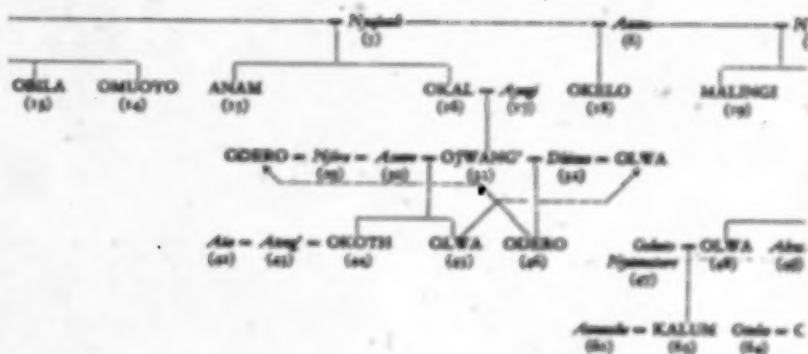


Men shown in CAPITALS.
 Women shown in *italics*.

— co-wives with husbands.
 - - - widows or men inheriting widows of a
 belonging to a different generation to

[facing p. 32a]

613



with husbands.
check widows of relations be-
cause given to their own.

[facing p.32, b]

613

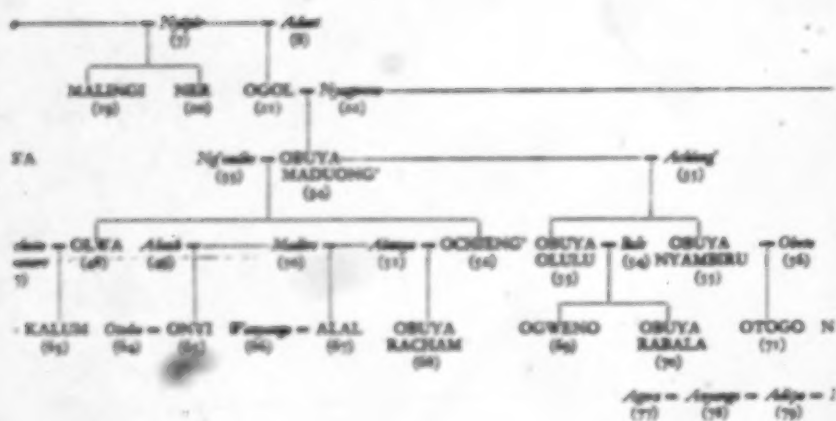
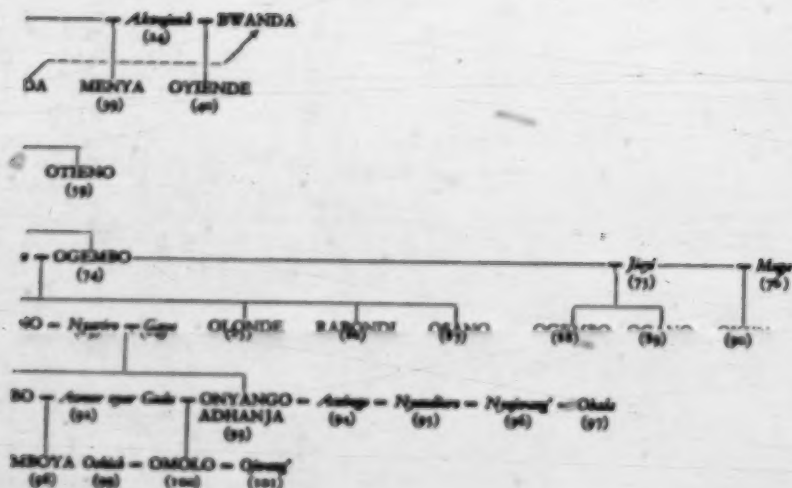


FIG. 5

[facing p. 12, c]

• 613



[facing p. 32, e]

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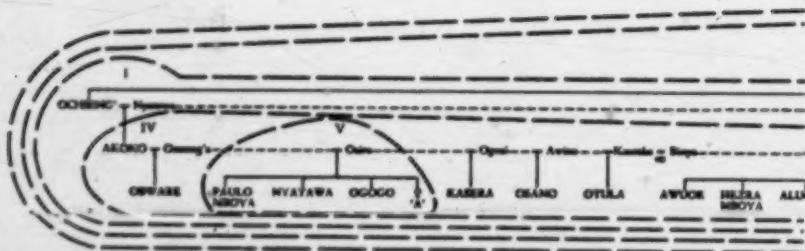
Men shown in CAPITALS.

Women " " small letters.

----- connects co-wives with husband.

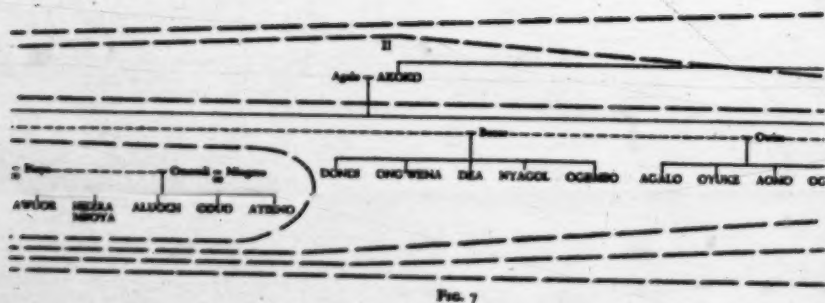
----- shows the mode of distribution numbered in the order in which they occurred.

no marriage without male issue.



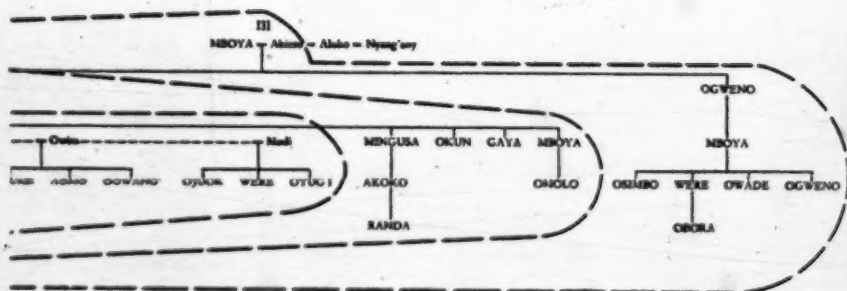
[facing p. 33, a]

613



[facing p. 33, b]

613



[facing p. 33, c]

NORM AND DEVIATION IN SEGMENTARY SYSTEM 33

613 and 52, 34 and 24) are co-ordinate because they segment from the same generation level although their actual eponyms do not. This ambiguity arises when an ancestor has surviving issue only through one wife and one son, or when men leave issue only by inherited wives as in Nos. 45 and 46.

The question arises why the following segments are not recognized as *dhoudi* superordinate to the segments they contain:

No. 11 as the *dhoudi* superordinate to Nos. 25 and 60

10	"	"	"	11 and 12
16	"	"	"	29, 44, and 32
52	"	"	"	65, 67, and 51
33	"	"	"	62, 65, 67, and 52
84	"	"	"	92 and 93
75	"	"	"	81, 82, 85, 86, and 87
74	"	"	"	75 and 76
57	"	"	"	73 and 74
37	"	"	"	57 and 59
23	"	"	"	36 and 37.

A variety of reasons may contribute to the explanation of these anomalies in particular cases, but the most usual reasons can be illustrated from one out of these examples—the *dhoudi* of Kogweno (82). Kogweno, with its population of over 9,000 (estimate for year 1947), has far outgrown its co-ordinates Kolonde (85), Karabondi (86), and Kosano (87), of whom only Karabondi has a population of as many as 1,000. Kamiser (81), with a population of over 4,000, is also very large, and both Kogweno and Kamiser overshadow all the other *dhoudi* in Kaduet (8) in numbers, territory, and consequently in political power. Kogweno and Kamiser, therefore, need no intermediate level of political organization between their own and that of Kaduet (8), and affairs too big for settlement within Kogweno or Kamiser could only be dealt with by Kaduet as a whole. Thus *dhoudi* such as Kobuya (34), Konyango Majieri (36), Kotieno (59), and Kakwajuok (24) would join in council with Kogweno (82) and Kamiser (81) on equal terms although they belong to much higher levels of segmentation. On the other hand, small *dhoudi* such as Kolonde (85), Karabondi (86), and Kosano (87) cannot even claim this seniority to counterbalance their lack of size. They might get places in the council of Kaduet (8) by courtesy, their voices carrying little weight unless through outstanding individual ability, or else they might be content to tack on to Kogweno (82), and rely on the proximity of their relationship to this lineage to secure their rights.

Furthermore, *dhoudi* which are somewhat overshadowed by their rivals may form subsidiary groupings which break the principle of co-ordination by including some but not all the co-ordinates in a superordinate segment. Thus Kolonde (85), Karabondi (86), Kosano (87), Kajieyi (75), and Kamuga (76), tend to group themselves together as Kogembo (74), to the tacit exclusion of Kogweno (82), which can stand alone without their help. Kobuya (34), Konyango Majieri (36), and Kakwajuok (24) tend to group as Kogol (21), to the exclusion of the descendants of Bwanda (38). In these instances Kogembo (74) and Kogol (21) have the quasi-status of *dhoudi*, being regarded as such by some but not all of the segments they contain.

613 There may also be cases of former *dhoudi* which have lapsed into passivity. This seems to have happened to Kowuor Nyapala (57) and to Kagaya (84). Since Kanyariro (83) is a *gweng'* and *dhoot* on its own and has been so for several generations, the original split was probably between Kanyariro (83) and Kagaya (84), so that both these segments would then have been a *dhoot*. But the growth of Kagaya was so rapid that it quickly split again into the *dhoudi* of Kawuor (92) and Konyango Adhanja (93) and later these segmented even farther. This seems to have made Kagaya redundant as a *dhoot*, for it was no longer a necessary intermediate grouping for political or economic purposes between its own subordinates and Kogweno (82), and it must therefore have lapsed into a class B segment, leaving Kanyariro without any genealogically co-ordinate *dhoot*. Kowuor Nyapala (57) is a similar case, and here, too, it probably happened that Kowuor Nyapala and Kotieno (59) originally divided each as a *dhoot*, after which the rapid growth and further segmentation of the descendants of Owuor Nyapala rendered it redundant, with the large *dhoudi* within it, such as Kogweno (82) and Kamiser (81), acting as immediate subdivisions of the *dhoot* of Kaduet (8). Kotieno (59) was then, like Kanyariro, left without any *dhoot* genealogically co-ordinate with it.

Kakwajuok (24), Kanjira (29), Kadkhimu (32), and Kawuor (92) represent another class of *dhoudi* derived from women. Here the reason for choosing female *dhoot* eponyms appears to have been not the convenience of basing segmentation on co-wives, but the fact that they were inherited by stepsons or brothers-in-law after their husbands' death, and thus united in one segment lines of descent begotten on them by different lineage members.

We have seen that the general relations of *dhoudi* are far from being in strict conformity with the theory of co-ordination which the Luo speak of as a norm in lineage activity. But when a *dhoot* acts ritually it conforms to this much more closely, just as the *anywala* segments of class B do. For example, if Konyango Majieri (36) sacrificed to their eponym they would call representatives of Kabwanda (38) as their co-ordinate, and of Kobuya (34) and Kakwajuok (24), which are co-ordinate to Konyango Majieri and Kabwanda combined. Here Kabwanda is called into activity, and the great disparity in strength between it and the other segments represented is ignored. Similarly, in ritual Kanyariro (83) would treat Kagaya (84) as a *libamba* co-ordinate to it, although in other matters Kanyariro has to submit to equality with Kamboya (98), Komolo (100), and Konyango Adhanja (93), which are genealogically junior to it. In ritual relations the genealogical order of seniority between the lineage segments which are called is also strictly observed, for the elders who represent them receive their shares of meat, or take their places for the drinking of beer, according to this order of precedence.

However, the members of *dhoudi* probably become so used to the order of relationships which prevails between them in political or economic affairs that on the rather infrequent ritual occasions when strict genealogical co-ordination might be preserved they may fail to take advantage of it. It is likely to be segments such as Konyango Majieri (36) or Kotieno (59) which snatch at opportunities for enforcing theoretical parities on ritual occasions, precisely because in day-to-day affairs they forfeit their seniority to segments such as Kamiser (81) and Kogweno (82) which they cannot match in strength.

VI. RITUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL EXPRESSIONS OF LINEAGE STRUCTURE

It is among the *anyuola* segments subordinate to minimal *dhoudi*, which have not had time to become too unequal in size, that the strictest adherence to the theory of co-ordination is practised. As an illustration of this I give here an account of the performance of *riso*—a ritual transaction between a husband and his wife's mother—at which I was present. It is a typical example of the co-ordinate activity of class B segments. The diagram (Fig. 7, facing p. 33) is a continuation of the chart (Fig. 6), and shows the members of the *dhoot* of Mboya (98) who participated or were represented on this occasion. Female as well as male members of the lineage participate; consequently the personnel of the smallest *anyuola* segments includes both the wives and daughters of male lineage members, and so coincides with that of the extant elementary families. But in the genealogy of dead ancestors the daughters of members are omitted, as having normally married and become ancestresses in other lineages and so lost significance in their own, while the wives of members still have to be included for their structural importance.

Since a lineage tends to act ritually at two levels simultaneously—the super-ordinate lineage deployed into its major segments¹—it is all the easier to picture it, even at its remoter ancestral levels, as a family divided into its component cells (see above, p. 31, 'compression'). It was the woman 'A' whose *riso* was being performed. She belongs to the elementary family of her mother Osiru, a minimal *anyuola* segment. Osiru's two childless co-wives and the five others, with their sons, represent the compound polygynous family of Akoko-Ochieng', now dead. The compound family of his father, Ochieng'-Akoko, contained the four elementary families of Nyatawa, Buore, Owira, and Modi. Ochieng''s father Akoko-Mboya had issue by one wife only, the elementary family of Agalo. Akoko-Mboya and his brother Ogweni together represent the elementary family of their mother Abiero, whose agnatic descendants constitute the *anyuola* of Kabiero within which the *riso* was performed. Mboya had other wives besides Abiero, but their descendants are very few and do not live in the *gweng*² called after Mboya. The result is that the descendants of Abiero can call themselves *dhoot* Kamboya, since they have successfully claimed Mboya's name for it, but in ritual situations such as this it is more correct for them to call themselves *anyuola* Kabiero, for *anyuola* Kamboya would include the descendants of Mboya's other wives, who had no share in the occasion.

Riso is said to be a *singruok* (promise) with the mother of one's wife. Until it is performed the wife is technically free to go to her home and associate with other men, visiting the *simba* (see p. 19) if she likes, but after *riso* has been performed she can no longer do so, and her own lineage would prevent her. The husband kills a bull, retains one foreleg for himself, and sends the rest to his wife's mother for division by the elders of the *anyuola*. The senior living elder of *anyuola* Kabiero is Dondi-Ochieng'. The first round of meat distribution (marked I on the diagram) was the taking of their shares by Dondi, Aomo, and Ojuok, senior living elders of the *anyuola* segments of Buore, Owira, and Modi. Each of these, after taking his share home, made a subsidiary division of it to his uterine brothers or to the eldest

¹ *The Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 31.

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613 sons of uterine brothers who were dead; thus Dondi to Ong'wena, Dea, Nyagol,
583 and Ogembo; Aomo to Ogwang' and to the eldest sons of Agalo and Oyuke who
606 were dead; Ojuok to Were and Oyugi. This completed the major segments of the
anyuola of Ochieng'-Akoko except for that of Nyatawa, the actual grandmother of
the woman; this segment, as host, came last. The lineage of Ochieng'-Akoko has
as its co-ordinates those of Mingusa, Okun, Gaya, and Mboya. There were no
representatives of Okun or Gaya present, but Randa and Omolo were there for
Mingusa and Mboya, and their taking of shares completed the distribution to the
major segments of the *anyuola* of Akoko-Mboya (marked II on the diagram). This
latter has one co-ordinate in the *anyuola* of Ogweno, which was represented by
Ogweno's senior grandson Osimbo, who took his portion to share it with Owade
and Ogweno, younger brothers, and Obora, eldest son of his dead brother Were.
Thus the entire structure of *anyuola* Kabiero (marked III on the diagram) was
represented in the ritual. There followed the distribution within the 'host' *anyuola*
of Nyatawa, the woman's own grandmother (IV on the diagram). First the woman's
half-brothers Obware, Kaseera, Osano, Otula, Awuor, Hezra Mboya, and Aluoch
took their portions; then there was a separate distribution in the *anyuola* of Osiru
(V on the diagram) to the woman's uterine brothers Paulo Mboya,¹ Nyatawa, and
Ogogo.

During the morning, before the actual distribution was made, all the elders present
ate together certain other portions of meat² which by custom have to be eaten raw
on this occasion. Besides this there was the customary portion for the eldest married
daughter of the woman's mother; the neck and top ribs to be cooked by the woman's
mother for her brothers to eat together with any friends they like to call; the kidneys
to be cooked by the woman's sisters who are still in their mother's house, and eaten
by them together with any friends they like to call, and the liver and remaining ribs
and offal to be eaten by all the women of the homestead where the division is made.
The division of the animal might be tabulated as follows:

1. First foreleg: for the slaughterer, husband of the woman.
2. Second foreleg: for all the descendants of the woman's father (except those who
receive under 4).
3. First hindleg: (a) to be divided to the heads of the houses of each of the co-wives of
the woman's paternal grandmother, and to be shared by them with their surviving
uterine brothers and the eldest sons of any deceased uterine brothers;
(b) to be divided to the heads of the houses of the uterine brothers of the woman's
paternal grandfather and similarly shared by them;
(c) to be divided to the heads of the houses of the uterine brothers of the woman's
paternal great-grandfather and similarly shared by them. (No intermediate division
to the heads of the houses of the co-wives of the woman's great-grandmother
because Agalo was the only wife of Akoko-Mboya.)
4. Second hindleg: for the woman's mother and her sons.
5. Neck and top ribs: for the woman's brothers and their friends.

¹ Paulo Mboya was Chief of Karachuonyo from 1935 to 1946, and since then has been Executive Secretary of the Local Native Council of South Kavirondo. In 1948 he was appointed to represent Kenya Africans on the East Africa Central Assembly. I was deeply indebted to him for much kind assistance

during my stay in Karachuonyo.

² These were *kuwo* (bump), *tiind ng'et* (chine), *tiind oguro* (rump), *chine*, and *aduku*. *Oba*, *adando*, and *awingo* are eaten after they have been cooked by the method of *hulo*—roasting by holding them over the open fire.

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6. Liver and remaining ribs and offal: for all the women of the homestead. 37 613
 7. Kidneys: for the woman's sisters still in their mother's house and their friends. 583
 8. Customary portion for the eldest married daughter of the woman's mother. 606
 9. Customary portions to be eaten, some raw, some cooked by *buo*, by all the elders assembled for the distribution.

It is worth while to treat this one rite at length, because it is the prototype of so many others. Its especial significance is that it takes place at the lowest level of segmentary organization, that it is bound to occur in every family as often as a daughter is married off, and that it draws into a structured participation not merely lineage leaders and senior elders but every man, woman, and child in the family. When the Luo youngster of either sex begins to grasp why, on certain occasions, it receives a special supply of kidney or ribs to roast on the fire with its playmates, its education in the theory of lineage structure has begun. The same holds true for all the wives of the men who bring home their portions of meat to be cooked, and share them with favourite wives or children, or allow them the scraps. [867]

There are many other occasions on which meat has to be ritually divided. In every case a similar procedure is followed, with the same articulation of lineage structure. 613
 There are the sacrifices previously mentioned, which are made to the ancestor indicated by the diviner as the cause of some misfortune. Sacrifice is also made usually 782
 within a year or so of the death of any elder of importance, and the level of lineage whose major segments are called to share in it depends upon the dead man's status. 769
 If he took part in the councils of the maximal lineage its major segments would certainly be called; if he was of less importance the major segments of a lineage at some lower level would be called. A further custom occasioning a demonstration of lineage segmentation is that whereby an elder of importance chooses a bull to be eaten after his death, the segments of his lineage dividing it among themselves according to principles similar to those of *riso*.

Besides sacrifices, every beer party, of whatever size and on whatever occasion, is also a display of lineage structure at one level or another. These parties are exceedingly frequent, and most frequent of all in the comparative leisure of the dry season, when there is a pause between the completed harvest and the next cultivation not yet begun. At this time few weeks will pass without a beer party somewhere in the vicinity, and often they follow on one another for days on end. In every one there is a core of elders who epitomize the structure of the lineage segments participating in the occasion. This is all quite apart from the small quantities of beer which old men like to drink with two or three neighbours independently of any ceremonial pretext. But all parties of any size have a ritual occasion, whether it be one of the innumerable occasions resulting from death which are strung out over a period of at least one and often two years, or in connexion with marriage, or for the settlement of the periodic and seasonal affairs of a class A lineage. [571]

In the larger beer parties the pitchers are distributed among lineage segments in the same way as are the joints of meat after a sacrifice. In all of them the order of drinking is strictly determined by lineage seniority, starting with the representatives of the major segments of the superordinate lineage, in the order of seniority of their eponymous ancestors, and downwards through the subordinate levels of the line particularly concerned. The level of major segments involved is always an index 613 574 576

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574 of the importance of the occasion, and of the status of the individual concerned in
576 it, and the procedure further epitomizes the internal structure of these groups.

613 For present purposes the significance of all these ritually occasioned social gather-
574 ings is that their place of meeting is always the family homestead, and in this way
from time to time even the meanest members of the least important family have
vividly impressed upon them the segmentary principles of the social structure to
which they belong. The underlying economic and domestic arrangements through
which these assemblies are, as it were, financed by the provision of food—which
may be required to feed large numbers of people for days on end—themselves
occasion a subsidiary marshalling of lineage organization. Convenience dictates that
the families most concerned in this shall be those which are not only agnatically but
spatially nearest to one another. This means that the levels of structure epitomized
are similar to those involved in the *riso* ceremony. The primary organizational
responsibility falls on the chief wife or widow of the homestead of assembly, who
orders the contributions of its other female household heads. Then the senior wife
of the head of the *anywola* group at the next higher level of segmentation has a like
duty to organize the contribution of her group, followed by the female heads of
each *anywola* co-ordinate to hers in order of genealogical seniority. After this the
next higher level of segments is called into play, and so on, the number of subsequent
levels which must be called upon depending on the scale of the occasion, as reflected
in the numbers of those who attend and the length of time that they stay. Thus
not only as members of the entertaining homestead, but also as members of the
many neighbouring homesteads drawn in to assist in the commissariat, the house-
wives and elder daughters who cook the food, the young children of both sexes who
must run as messengers and act as carriers of the food itself, all repeatedly have
impressed upon their experience the lower levels of the lineage structure which
permeates their society. In the rural isolation of a subsistence economy these are
the events which loom large on the social horizon, occupying the mind and feeding
conversation. It is hardly surprising that a people like the Luo grow up with a com-
plete practical grasp, at a level which requires no abstract formulation, of those
principles of social organization which seem at first so intricate and confusing to the
outsider.

613 *Anywola* segments within the minimal *dhoot* and *gweng* also act as mutual assistance
571 groups. It is within them that cattle may be borrowed for making marriage pay-
426 ments. Nowadays it is the members of such groups who rely on one another for the
loan of small sums of money required in the many transactions resulting from new
needs. They tend to meet for consideration of any matters of common concern;
these meetings are rather informal, but usually recognize the leadership of the member
who is eldest by lineage seniority, and are often accompanied by the drinking of beer.

VII. THE MECHANISM OF SEGMENTATION

613 It is now possible to give further details of how certain class B segments (*anywola*)
within a minimal class A lineage achieve class A status themselves as units of primary
settlement, the basic segments in the articulated system of *gweng* and *dhoot*. When
this occurs, of course, the previous minimal class A segment is raised from its

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minimal status to operate as superordinate of the newly formed segments. The process is an extension on a larger scale, of that which begins whenever married sons leave their father's homestead and form separate ones of their own. Custom sets limits to the period within which this occurs. A son cannot leave his father's homestead and form one of his own till he himself has a son able to 'carry the axe' in the ritual of opening a new homestead. On the other hand, a son is not supposed to stay on in his father's homestead after he has a daughter who is nubile. When this occurs while he still has no son, he must move to the homestead of one of his father's brothers or other agnatic relative. If his father dies before he has been able to establish his own homestead he must then sacrifice to his father before doing so. Within these limits the splitting apart of married sons from their father's homestead will depend on their relations with one another, their character and ambition, the contrary pulls of allegiance to a common father matched by the jealousy of sons of different mothers, and the rivalries between brothers matched by the need to unite in competition with other sibling groups. These human relations will always be further pointed by the need of every family for its own building, arable, and grazing land. When a family segments it may be able simply to divide its land correspondingly to satisfy all the segments, or else the latter must collectively occupy a larger area than before. Similarly, when a *gweng* splits into several new *gwenge* it may simply divide its territory or have to occupy more at the same time. The net result of all these integrative and disintegrative forces is worked out within the framework determined by the Luo adherence to an agnatic basis of social grouping. Throughout, the behaviour of segments is largely a repetition on the group plane of certain attitudes of individuals within the family, the people themselves regarding the lineage system as a magnified reflection of the family process. Both are, of course, the product of human biological growth and reproduction interacting with a particular set of values expressed within a limiting physical environment. It is therefore misleading to represent them only by a formal analysis which omits intrinsic causes of variation.

Given the structure of the Luo family as earlier described, if a man marries several women and begets sons who repeat the process, the result is bound to be the multiplication of homesteads. To the extent that the families of a whole settlement act in this way, the result is bound to be the multiplication of settlements. Conversely, if families fail to multiply, homesteads either disappear or are merely replaced, and the membership of a settlement is also merely replaced, with no change of structure except an increase in genealogical depth. The rivalry noted between individuals and groups within the family is repeated on a larger scale in the natural divergence of interests and weakening of sentiments of solidarity between different *anyola* segments. Complementary to this general weakening of bonds which predisposes fission must be the appearance of initiative in some individual suitably placed to lead his group in the establishment of a new settlement. This positive factor is the necessary precipitating agent of the process in which the new *dhoudi* of the primary settlements are formed. The size of each co-ordinate resulting from the fission of a superordinate segment must be adequate in adult male membership to support the responsibilities of a separate settlement.

Finally, there must be adequate land available in which the new *gwenge* can be

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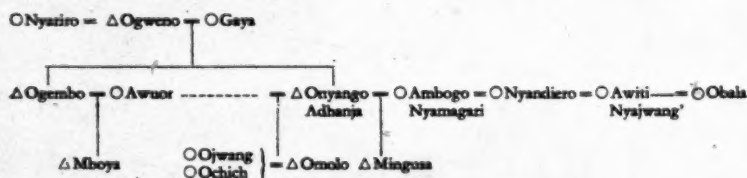
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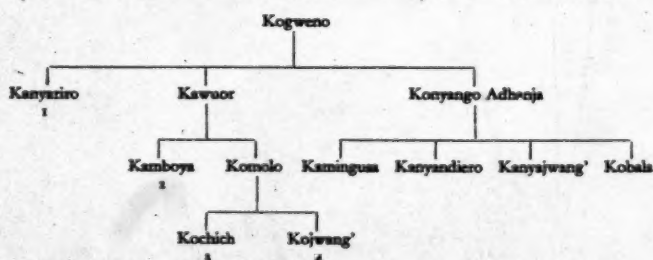
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founded. *Gwang'* left a belt of unoccupied land in between one another's territory, referred to as *thim* (wilderness). This insulated one lineage from another, and disputes between lineages took place in it. It was also a reservoir which could be drawn upon for expansion when a new *gwang'* wanted land to found its settlement. Karachuonyo is now densely settled except where land is poor, and there is practically no *thim* left which could support new settlements. Consequently the process of *gwang'* and *dhoot* formation has now reached its limit in Karachuonyo, as indeed it has in many parts of Luoland today for the same reason. But some parts of South Kavirondo still have land to spare, in which the old process of settlements splitting into new segments and expanding into the *thim* can still go on. The other lineages of the Jook group (see map, Fig. 3)—Kabuocho, Kanyamwa, Karungu, and Kadem—all have *thim* still left.

The process of *gwang'* formation is best demonstrated with reference to a concrete instance. The diagram below shows the genealogical relations of the eponymous ancestors of *dhoudi* descended from Ogweni, see (82), fig. 6 a male ancestor fifth in line of descent from Rachuoonyo.



The present structural relations of these *dhoudi* may be charted as follows:



The four numbered segments are all minimal class A lineages. Their structural positions are obviously very different. Their comparative depth is indicated by the fact that the present *gwang'* head of Kanyariro belongs to the fifth descending generation, the head of Kamboya to the third, and the heads of Kochich and Kojwang' to the second descending generations from their eponymous ancestors. In all these cases the difference in depth is correlated with a difference in the rate of numerical expansion. Kanyariro has grown most slowly, Kochich and Kojwang' most rapidly of the four. Indeed, the line of Kochich and Kojwang' has undergone no less than four

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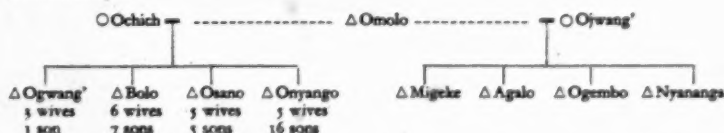
stages of class A segmentation in very quick succession: first, the separation of the descendants of Ogweno's second wife Gaya from those of his first wife Nyariro; second, the separation of the descendants of Awuor—the wife of Ogembo inherited after his death by his younger brother Onyango Adhanja—from the descendants of Onyango Adhanja's own wives; third, the separation of the descendants of Omolo from those of his brother Mboya; finally, the separation of the descendants of Omolo's two wives Ochich and Ojwang'. During all this process Kanyariro grew so slowly that it failed to segment at all. Of course, each new stage of segmentation does not destroy the groupings of the last, but raises their operation to a higher level. The fact that Kochich and Kojwang' split apart to form new *gungu* does not destroy Komolo as a *gungu*, but rather gives it a new importance as it is then no longer a minimal *dhoot* but has its own subordinate *dhoudi*. So by an immense process of secular competitive elimination, certain households and homesteads of the past have given rise to *anyuola* segments which later achieved the status of *gungu* and *dhoot*, and have finally been raised by successive stages of segmentation to their present level as maximal lineages.

But are the figures in these genealogies historical figures, and did these families really multiply and those stagnate, or are all the circumstantial details a *post facto* rationalization of structural relations in terms of a lineage ideology? It seems on balance an easier hypothesis to suppose that there is a genuine element of truth in recorded genealogies and in recollections of recent events; that the omissions from and additions to factual history increase with time depth, and in proportion to the strength of motives for distortion and to the lack of endorsement of recollections of group events by frequent recapitulation in various social activities and embodiment in the pattern of territorial settlement, rather than to regard them purely as a mirage reflecting certain functions of the contemporary social structure. Genealogy is not myth, though it may well, and for the Luo certainly does, bridge the gap between an actual present and a mythical past. It is unlikely that a people, whose memory is shown by indubitable checks to be good (e.g. in the recollections of the coming of individual Europeans to Luoland more than fifty years ago, and of other known historical events of the same period), are wholly inaccurate in what they say about their immediate ancestors' activities in founding *gungu* and about the descent of *gungu* members from a paternal grandmother or grandfather. And if this is accepted there is no reason to throw much more doubt on the accounts of earlier ancestors, up to five or six generations back, where these conform to what is evidently true of more recent times. At the remoter genealogical levels the need for caution is obvious, and the stories told of first ancestors twelve to fourteen generations back are of a mythical type easily distinguishable from the more historical accounts of events and persons nearer in time. The Luo of Karachuonyo frankly admit that they know much less about their ancestors before they crossed over Kavirondo Gulf to their present territory about seven generations ago. From this time onward they can give endless details of ancestral activity, for mnemonics are provided by the topography itself and their continuous association with it; but before the crossing they have little to say of their ancestors except for those eponyms who are still of structural importance and who are the focus of a rich body of myth. I have, therefore, approached the account of the most recent levels of the lineage structure on

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613 the assumption that it is likely to be correct, in proportion to the certainty with which
127 it is given, the absence of deviant and contradictory versions, and its conformity
613 with the probabilities established by a knowledge of the forces operative in contemporary family life and in the contemporary activity of lineage segments.

To return to the lineage of Komolo: the rapidity of its growth can be seen from the diagram below showing some of the immediate male agnatic descendants of Omolo. Both Omolo's wives produced four sons, and the families of all these multiplied. The sons of Ochich between them married nineteen wives and begot twenty-nine sons, all these latter themselves having issue. The sons of Ojwang' were also prolific, but I have no exact figures for their agnatic issue. Rweya, the present *jadwang' gweng'* of Kochich, is a younger son of Onyango the founder of the *gweng'*, and Bolo, the present *jadwang' gweng'* of Kojwang', is son of its founder Agalo. Rweya's father Onyango was also a very famous leader, acting as chief elder of all Karachuonyo.



The conditions of *gweng'* formation were here satisfied in the reproductive growth of Omolo's patrilineal descendants, the presence of leaders necessary for the new settlements, the suitable numerical size of the *gweng'* defined by the lines of agnatic fission, and the availability of *thin* for them to occupy.¹ The descendants of Omolo were quite numerous enough to form more than a single *gweng'*, and by dividing according to the segments of Omolo's two wives they formed two new *gweng'* each of suitable size. They could not, however, have divided into the segments of Omolo's sons, for this would have meant fission into too many major segments each of too small size. None of these, except perhaps Onyango's, would have been large enough to form a separate *gweng'*. It would have been very unusual for Onyango's lineage to form a *gweng'* while its co-ordinates were unable to do so, for these latter would refuse to join Onyango's *gweng'* and call themselves after him, and could only remain in the undivided *gweng'* of Omolo or else divide into *gweng'* called after his wives, as actually happened. It is practical questions of this sort that require some *dhoudi* to derive their agnatic structure from apical ancestors who were women, and to be called after them, and which give rise to the principle that one co-ordinate cannot split off from its superordinate lineage without the rest.² It is fruitless to argue that these ancestresses were merely the wives of agnatic forebears and not even members of the lineage in the strict sense. To any question as to why they are derived from and called after non-agnatic females the members of such a lineage simply say

¹ It appears that ten or a dozen homesteads, that is, ten or a dozen males having reached the status of compound family heads, giving a total population of about one hundred persons, may have been about the minimum size necessary for the founding of a new settlement. In the location of Gem in South Kavirondo there is a case of a *gweng'* founded only

in 1924 which in 1947 had fifteen separate homesteads but which started with about ten.

² But if all but one of a group of co-ordinates dwindle into insignificance, the one co-ordinate of importance may be able to claim for itself the eponym of the lineage superordinate to them all, as in the case of the wives of Mboya; see above, p. 33.

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'because she is our mother'. The members of a lineage with a male eponymous ancestor reply as unhesitatingly 'because he is our father'. Lineage members certainly appear to think that the one derivation is as normal, logical, and useful as the other, and co-ordinate segments are tied together as well by descent from wives of a common husband as from sons of a common mother. Where there is a choice of points of origin, as when a co-wife has one son only, and either her name or his would serve to distinguish the same agnatic group from its co-ordinates, it is natural that the son is usually chosen as eponym. It remains true, none the less, that as focal points in the system of class B segmentation, both in family alignments and in ritual organization, both while still alive and when they have become points in the genealogies of the dead, the wives are frequently as essential as the lineage members who are their husbands, and in the case of class A lineages either may be chosen according to the exigencies of the settlement process. This ambivalence must be implicit in any lineage system patrilineal or matrilineal, for in either case the members of the unilateral descent group can only produce heirs and lineage members through cohabitation with non-members, who interpose their own pattern of potential segmentation intermediate to that of the agnates themselves.

An attempt has been made to show how lineages arise from the matrix of family life. Lineage and family differ by their unilateral and bilateral emphasis. Despite the fact that the Luo uphold the unilateral basis of the lineage when they say that the mother's blood counts for nothing in procreation, it has been seen that women are of great importance in the day-to-day affairs and in the actual structure of lineages. A man's daughters are members of their father's lineage. They may be present at lineage rituals, and even after their marriage into other lineages they may return to the lineage of their birth on important occasions; but their children and descendants are entirely cut off from the lineages of origin of their mothers. A man's wives always belong to other lineages, since the maximal lineage is exogamous, but as wives, and as mothers of lineage members, they also may be recipients at rituals of their husband's lineage; they are fundamental pivots in the system of ties and cleavages within the family out of which lineages spring, and in process of time they become ancestresses within their husband's lineage and may be the points of origin of lineage segments. The position of women in the lineage is thus of great moment, and in its ambivalence lineage and family are linked. As far as the individual member of either is concerned, there is a hen-egg relationship between them which cannot be further broken down by sociological techniques.

THE SCHOOL AGE

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be found playing alone. Weaving becomes more popular 857
between these ages, and before the advent of thread this 285
was done by means of grass stalks which were woven
into several patterns.

These patterns are still woven sometimes at home and
sometimes at play, but although they have not totally
disappeared they are no longer much in evidence. Male
children are sometimes taught to weave patterns by the
girls. At present odd threads gathered from old socks or
rags are used while stalks of grass serve as needles.

Age-group friendship. The age-group friendship which 857
characterizes so much of a girl's pre-marital life first 572
makes its appearance during the school-going age. But
at this time it is friendship in the simplest sense and is
more like a coming-together brought about by common
interests. The main feature of the relationship is visiting,
combined with moderate entertainment. After taking
food the young guests join in the play activities of the
friends they visit. The parents also take an interest and
put up with the financial burden involved. But the [613] ●
friendship established is essentially external in that it is
established between neighbouring girls of two lineages.*
Girls visit their friends in groups, and the relationship
grows weaker as the girls grow up. It appeared to me
that this friendship is strongest just before the advent of
their association with males on a sex basis.

As their interest in boys increases, the young girls'
natural desire for friendship is fulfilled. Friendships with
other girls are very much weakened by marriage and

**Lineages.* The term lineages refers to enlarged families with one
common ancestor or founder. These may live side by side with the
other related lineages. With the common ancestor and the branch-
ing family groups, the lineage structure appears as a 'Root System'.

As a result of fights between the various lineages in the past, [578]
some have been widely dispersed and may be found living among [166]
other groups not related to them. Frequent migrations have also
tended to complicate the structure.

857 sometimes break up at the slightest provocation or mis-
 572 understanding. The lineal character of the friendship is
 [613] facilitated by the social groupings of the people into
 lineages living side by side. This character is also as-
 sumed by the play groups which begin from the immedi-
 ate family circle and widen to include other members of
 the lineage to which the children belong. Although there
 also exists a considerable degree of friendship among
 male children it does not seem to be organized as closely
 as that among the girls. Though I saw frequent ex-
 amples of individual boyhood friendship I did not come
 across such a highly-developed arrangement.

THE CULTURAL PATTERN

857 Girls are born to a ready-made pattern of life and
 858 they are forced to follow this pattern from earliest child-
 hood. The school-age period is the one in which girls
 are especially trained to fit into the culture to which
 [177] they have been born. A woman's life therefore tends to
 show great conservatism even where civilizing influences
 have considerably penetrated. This conservatism is
 maintained through all the early training of the chil-
 dren and domestic activities are still carried on in
 almost the same traditional way.

In contrast, we find that male children between these
 ages have a greater degree of freedom. I noticed a larger
 variety of playthings among boys than among girls of
 the same school-going age. Day after day the girls re-
 peated imitations of the maternal activities. It was also
 much more difficult to discover where a group of boys
 had been playing than to find the favourite playgrounds
 of the female children. This was perhaps due to the
 difference in their freedom of movement. The occupa-
 tions of the girls keep them largely at home while the
 boys range over a much greater area.

V

BETROTHAL AND MARRIAGE
CUSTOMS

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

ONE difference between the older traditional kind of marriage and marriage as it is conducted nowadays lies in the part played by relatives to make the venture a success. Individual initiative was formerly negligible, the greater part of the marriage negotiations being undertaken by the relatives of both parties. This had the effect of reducing the importance of the bridegroom whose initiative gave way to a dependence upon the good will of his relations to whom the task of negotiation was left. 584
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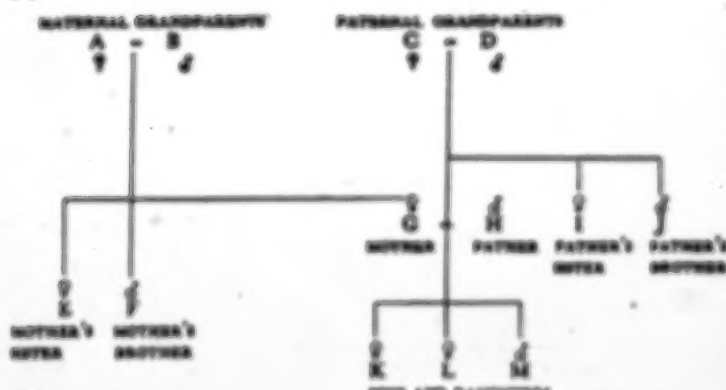
At present the tendency in marriage is towards individualism, although it is still a matter where society plays a considerable part. But since the individual man and woman are taking a greater part in deciding whom they shall marry, there is now a greater opportunity to develop an attachment genuinely based upon love. Steps are still usually taken, however, to ensure that the man's family has sufficient wealth to pay a satisfactory dowry, and the co-operation of the society in which the girl lives is needed if the relationship is to be successfully established. Great care is also taken to see that the marriage of the couple would not go against the normal stratification of relationships already in existence. 581

The marriage of a member of A-B family to C-D family* excludes the children of G and H from intermarrying with any member of the lineage of the maternal grandparents. So long as connection with the 582
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* See diagram on p. 44.

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THE LUO GIRL



maternal grandparents can be traced, descendants of G-H family will not marry the person concerned.

But E may be married to H's brother and I too may marry E's brother. Should F's son wish to marry from the community in which G has been married it would be G who would take the responsibility of looking for a young woman from among the daughters of her brothers-in-law and not from among her sisters-in-law. In the same way, the sons of G's brothers-in-law cannot marry any of G's sisters or sisters by relation (daughters of her uncles). The method of acting through a relative in establishing a marriage connection is still in use, although personal initiative is increasingly taking its place.

THE POSITION OF A BETROTHED WOMAN

The life of a betrothed woman presents a busy time of conflicting and disturbing news. Information of much discomfort to both parties comes and goes and is forgotten. To the girl such information is of great importance, and her attitude is often affected by it. Each time a

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512 *Daily rhythm of family duties.* The daily programme of a
 462 mother with a young child is divided into two major
 264 phases, corresponding with the morning and the even-
 [153] ing meals. In the morning the activities include the
 [356] preparation of gruel for the child, preceded by suckling
 it and sweeping the house. When prepared, the gruel is
 left with a nurse, to be given to the child when it cries.
 The mother then goes to the field or to any major work
 of the day. Preparation of the morning meal begins at
 about 9 a.m., and by 10 a.m. the family disperses again,
 the men perhaps to herd cattle or to go to market, and
 the women to fetch firewood or bring water from the
 river.

[178] The idea of having a meal freshly prepared in the
 morning is of recent origin. In the past, people ate cold
 food preserved from the previous evening meal. A great
 proportion of what is eaten during the week comes from
 the gardens.

[178] In former days, women were expected to prepare an
 afternoon gruel for their husbands at about 3 p.m. This
 is still the custom in some families, but modern women
 are quite ignorant of the practice in its traditional form.

868 *The social attitude towards male and female children.* The
 613 difference in the social attitude towards male and
 female children arises from considering them in relation
 to the future of the lineage to which they belong. A
 male child is looked upon as a dynamic element in the
 lineal structure. On the other hand, a female child,
 though a potential source of wealth, is regarded as an
 exporter of fertility from her parents' lineage to the
 lineage of her husband. Thus, if she becomes the mother
 [142] of many children, her larger numbers are looked upon
 [543] with disfavour as taking something away from her origi-
 nal family. This results in a superstitious feeling which
 affects her visits to the parental home.

MARRIED LIFE

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Although a larger number of males would normally be preferred, a family of exclusively male children is regarded as a disadvantage because of the economic burden incurred when the sons want to marry. But when a father has only female children, his position is considered as 'dead', for a family is only considered as living when there are male members to perpetuate the line.

THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Lineage. Social relationship among the Luo is determined by the strict manner in which their society is organized. Since the social structure follows a system of lineage (*dhou*di, pl., *dhoot*, sing.), the exogamous limits or the limits within which intermarriage may not take place, depend on the relationship between these lineages. When relationships are close, the lineages unite through their dead originators until a common ancestor is reached. The lineages continue to grow, thus stretching the distance of relationship further and further. The breaking of the rule against intermarriage depends on the attitude of the living members of the lineages and the distance between them and their ancestors.

In addition to the regulation of matrimonial relationships, the structure of the society also determines ritual observances and funeral ceremonies among the Luo, while the relationship between the different lineages is characterized by competition, which is often a feature of polygamous homes.

Family relationships. The difference between monogamous and polygamous homes is found not only in the status of the women, but also in the psychological attitude towards the parents resulting from the husband and wife relationship. Although it is generally assumed that the focus of family life is the father, the degree of

THE RELUCTANT LUO

Behind and beyond are old beliefs that are still alive. A man can lay upon a piece of land, when he is dying, an oath that binds his heirs to hold on to it for ever, and will destroy anyone who sells it out of the family—an entail with the sanction of magic. And then old homesteads on the Kano plains sheltering behind euphorbia hedges contain the bones of the deceased owner, who is buried under the floor of his hut. So consolidation may ask the son to exchange not merely a field of maize, but the bones of his father, the terrestrial anchor of his father's spirit. No wonder it is often too much to ask, and that politicians find these deep fires easy to fan. (77) (423) (189) (769)

To reach Nyabondo we climbed a small escarpment, the beginning of the Kipsigis hills, left the car beside a track and walked to the farm of a young, pleasant-mannered school supervisor called James Onyango, one of the leaders of the enclosure movement. We sat under a tree near his new tin-roofed modern bungalow, above a shallow valley with a stream. The country here is gently rolling and thickly dotted with roofs of homesteads. Many people had gathered in a circle; the women sat together in bright cottons and gay head-scarves, plump and glossy, most of them with grave-faced, round-eyed babies sleeping in their arms or crawling about the grass beside them. This question of land touches the women at the core. James Onyango told his story in English. (73) (177) (423)

The idea of exchanging gardens came to us two years ago; we had heard of it in other places; most of us were interested, and asked the Government to advise. We held a meeting and agreed unanimously to consolidate, all of us within the Kadianga clan, fifty-nine families. In our clan are three sub-clans; each appointed three men to form a committee. Each of these three was a *m'gare*—an elder whose task is to look after the land, and one of these was made the president. (361) (177) (423) (291)

We started to exchange our gardens, and at first everything was fair. Then came elections for the Legislative Council and the District Council. The candidates thought they would gain popularity by speaking against the land schemes. They campaigned among the people, and some listened. They had clever ways. In each sub-location they had an agent who (177) (423) (292) (665)

A NEW EARTH

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423 is a big thing. When we get some money, I shall ask my husband for a better house. We are in the way of progress now, but there is another thing: the Government must help us with our water, we need a scheme to bring it—that is the biggest thing.'

It is often said that women are the most conservative, and in some ways perhaps this may be so—especially in regard to marriage customs; but it struck me, almost everywhere I went, that it is the women who are most anxious to see these basic land reforms brought in, the men who oppose—not the old men so much as the younger, educated ones who have been to cities. Africa so often seems to reverse the expected order of things.

At any rate, there was no doubt of what these women thought about land reform. It is they, after all, the cultivators, the workers, who know where the shoe pinches, and no wonder they are out of patience with those young men of the towns who, while crying for political freedom, do their best to deny to their own women that measure of relief from hard, grinding toil which land consolidation and enclosure can afford.

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[596] Among the Luo, everything is done by clans—extended families would be a more correct term. This group is called the *jokawaru* and consists of all the descendants of one grandfather. They hold their land in common and each individual, as he marries, is allocated a *shamba* by the *ligwu*, the land elders. In time he probably inherits cultivation rights over other pieces from various mothers, uncles and cousins, and that is how fragmentation arises. All grazing land is held in common, as among all other tribes.

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[425] The *jokawaru* system is at once a strength and a weakness, from a modern point of view. Livestock improvers regard it as an unmitigated curse.

'All the members of the group must agree to any sale of stock by any individual,' a vet told me. 'That makes destocking almost impossible, if only out of bloody-mindedness.' The livestock picture generally is a gloomy one. 'We are still trying to get across one or two of the most basic principles, such as dipping or spraying against ticks. Among the Kipsigis,